STARBLAZER

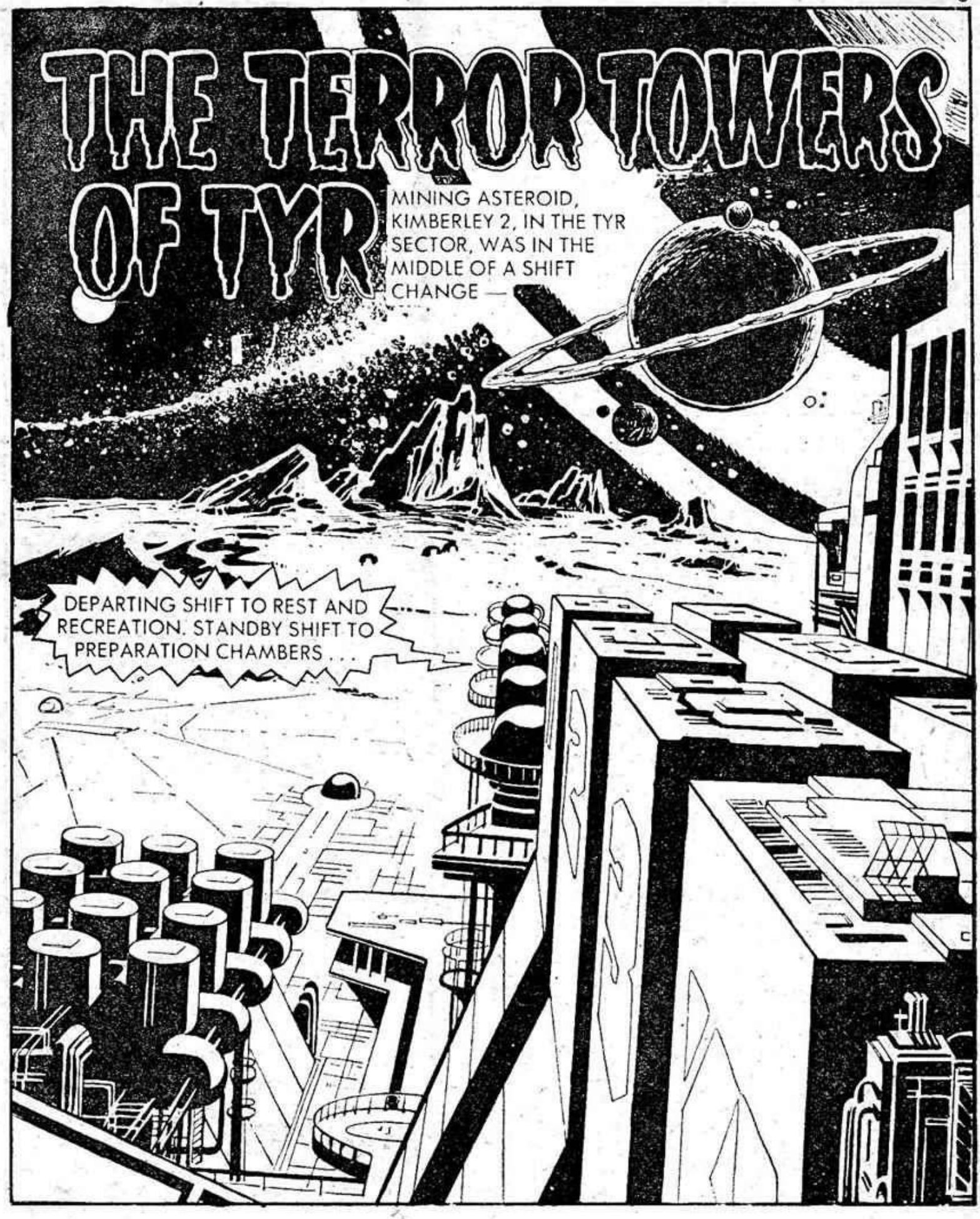
SPACE FICTION ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 117

20p

THE TERROR TOWERS OF TYR

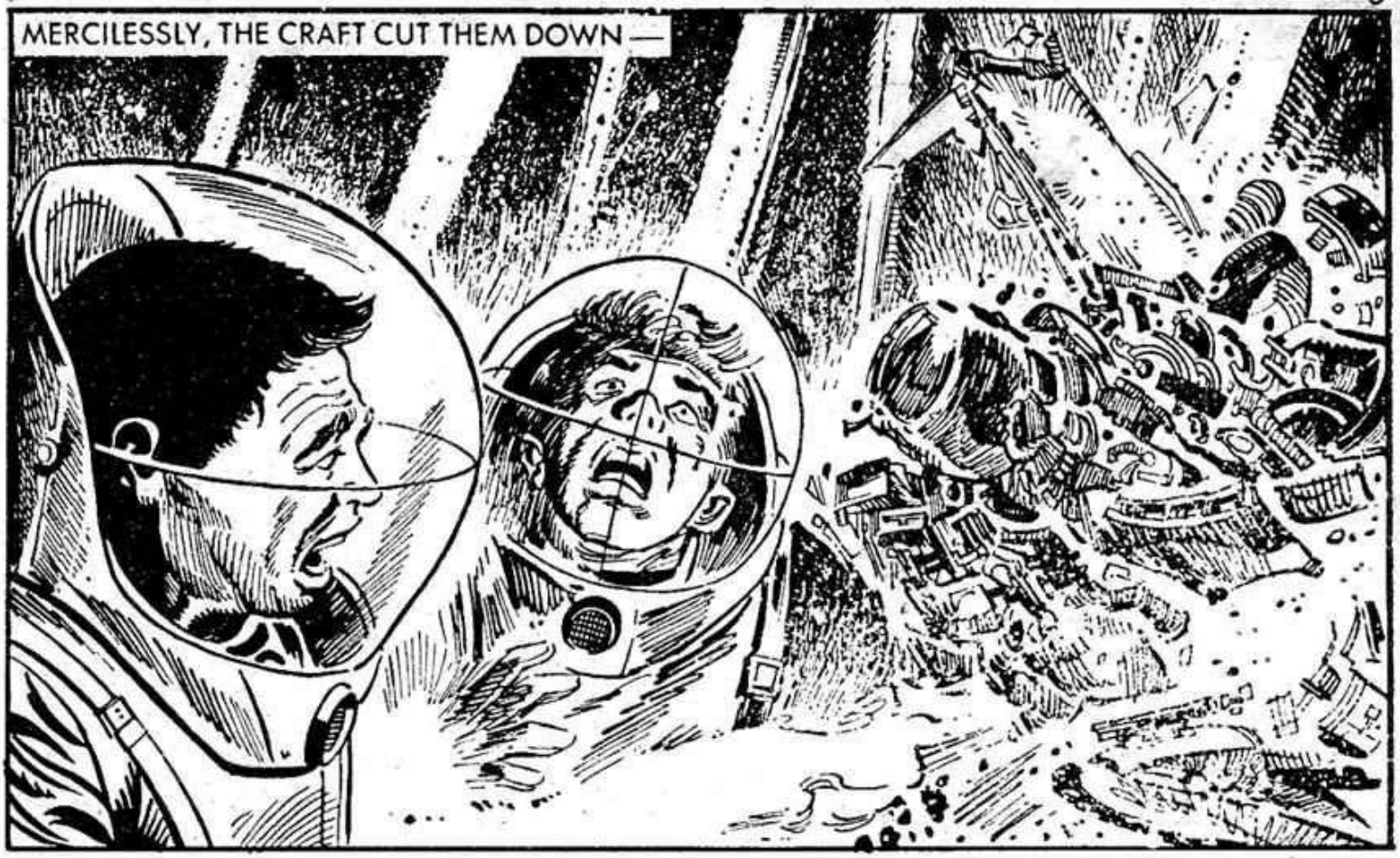
STARBLAZER

IN DEEP SPACE, A RARE METAL CALLED ASTRIUM WAS MINED ON THE GREAT ASTEROID COLONIES OF EARTH FEDERATION PLANET TYR. ASTRIUM HAD STRANGE PROPERTIES THAT MADE IT IDEAL AS AN OUTER COATING FOR SPACE CRAFT—IT WAS ABLE TO ALL BUT NULLIFY GRAVITY. BUT AN ALIEN RACE FROM ANOTHER GALAXY KNEW THIS, AND WERE PREPARED TO DO ANYTHING TO OBTAIN IT. THEY TURNED THE PEACEFUL CITIES INTO—

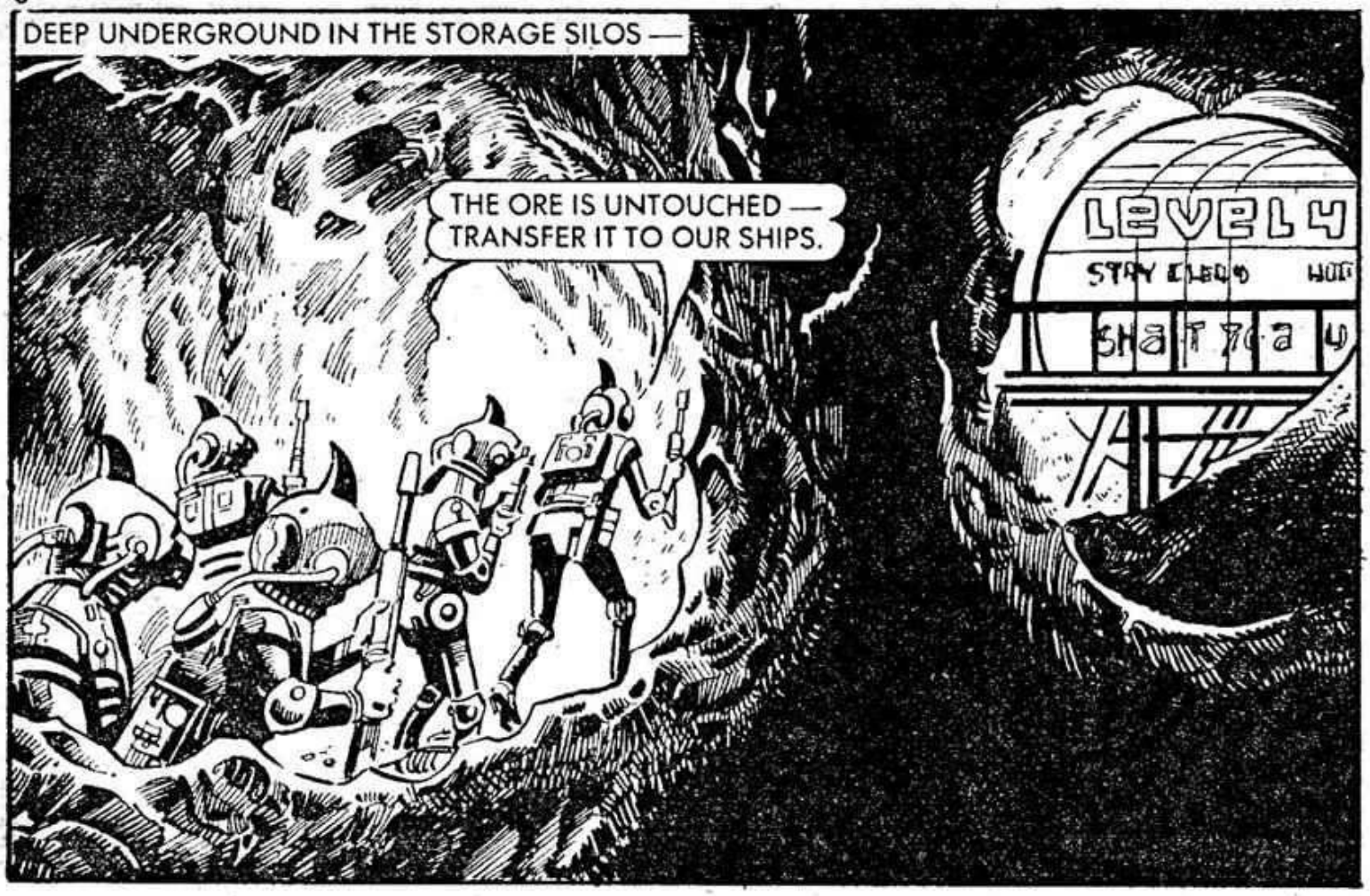

THE TERROR TOWERS OF TYR
MINING ASTEROID, KIMBERLEY 2, IN THE TYR SECTOR, WAS IN THE MIDDLE OF A SHIFT CHANGE —
DEPARTING SHIFT TO REST AND RECREATION. STANDBY SHIFT TO PREPARATION CHAMBERS . . .

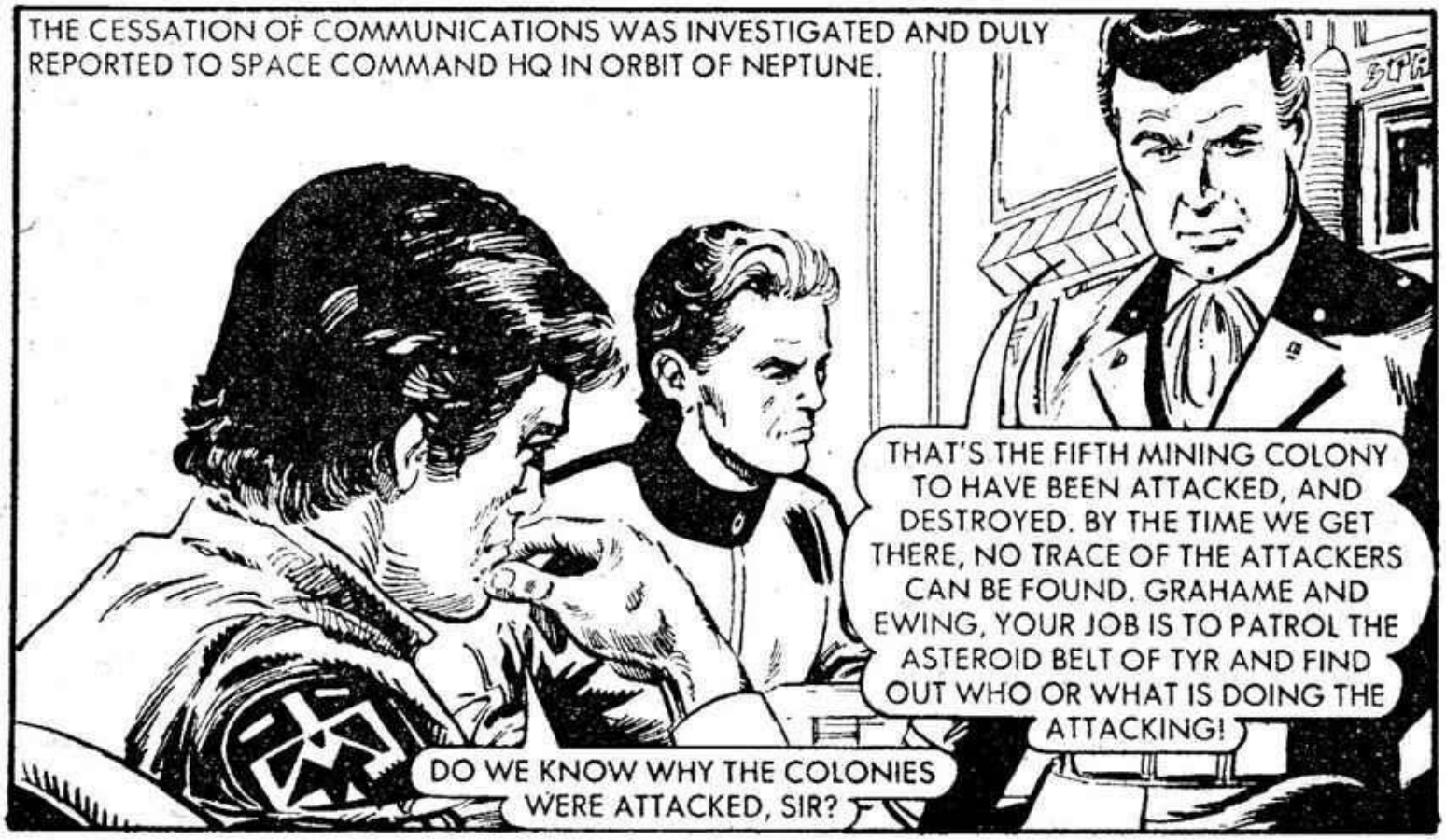
SPACECRAFT SWEPT IN OVER THE MINING COMPLEX —
THE SUPPLY FLEET FROM TYR ISN'T DUE YET.
THOSE AREN'T EARTH SHIPS!

WHAT THE . . ? THEY'RE FIRING!


MERCILESSLY, THE CRAFT CUT THEM DOWN —

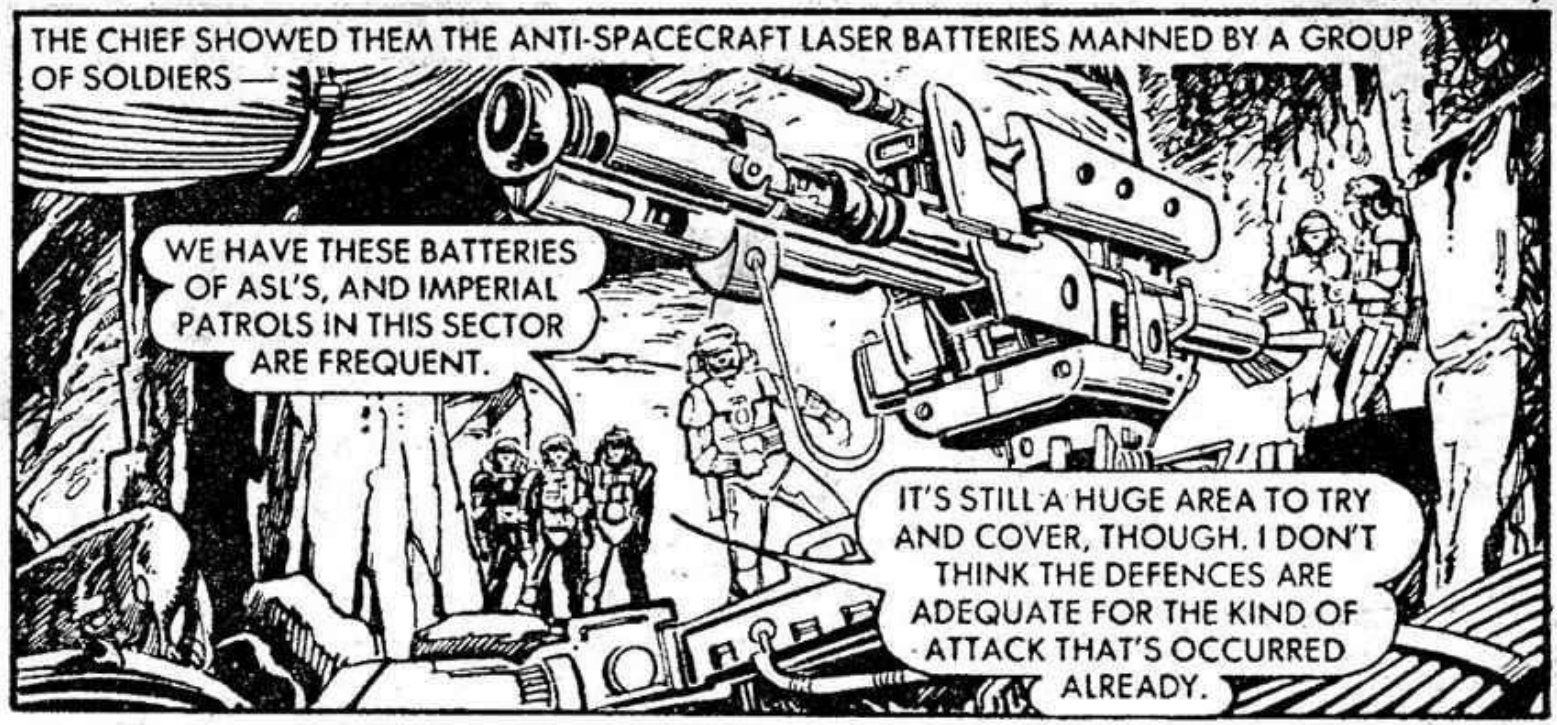
AFTER THE DEVASTATION, A TROOPSHIP TOUCHED DOWN.
WE NOW HAVE CONTROL!

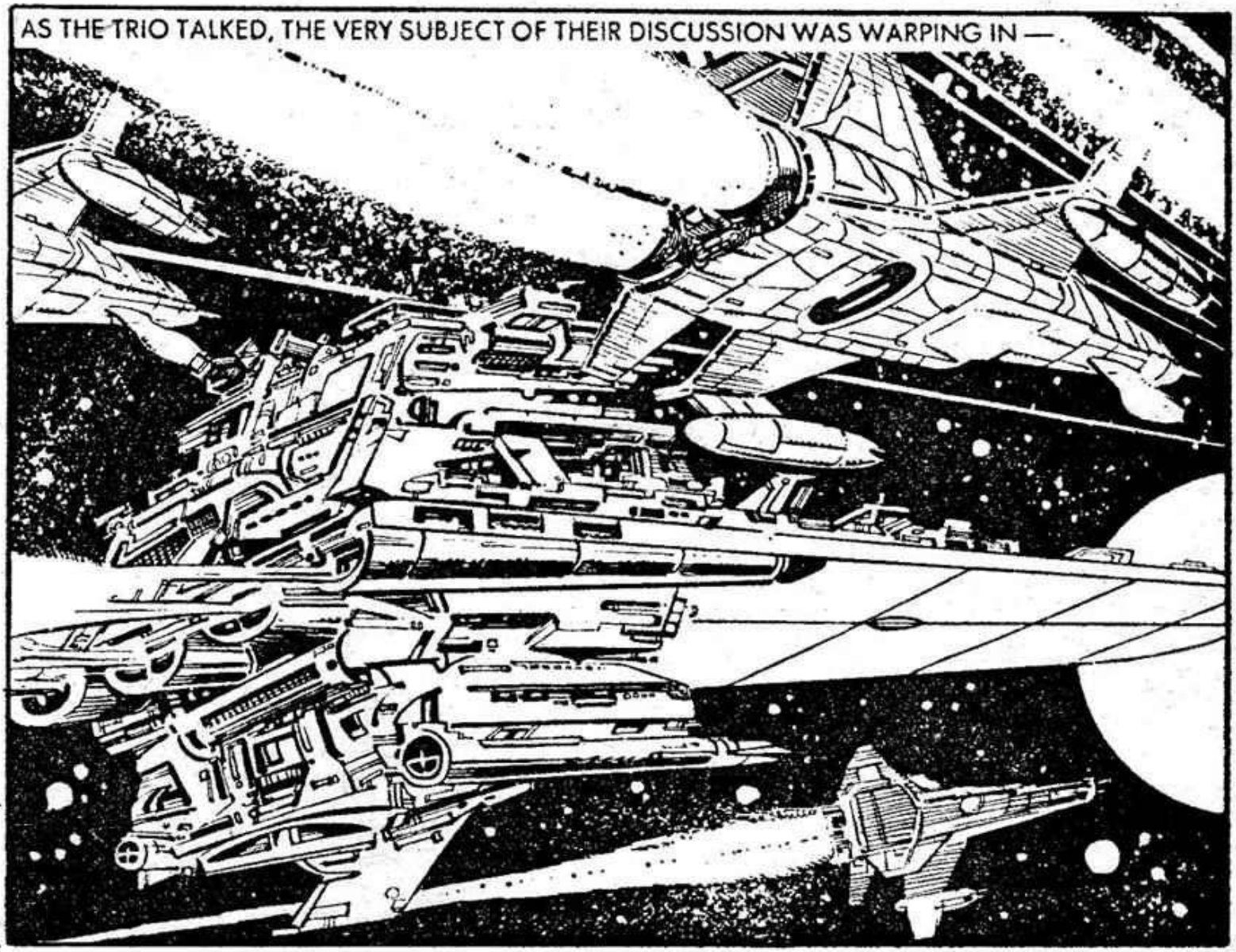

DEEP UNDERGROUND IN THE STORAGE SILOS —
THE ORE IS UNTOUCHED — TRANSFER IT TO OUR SHIPS.
LEVEL 4

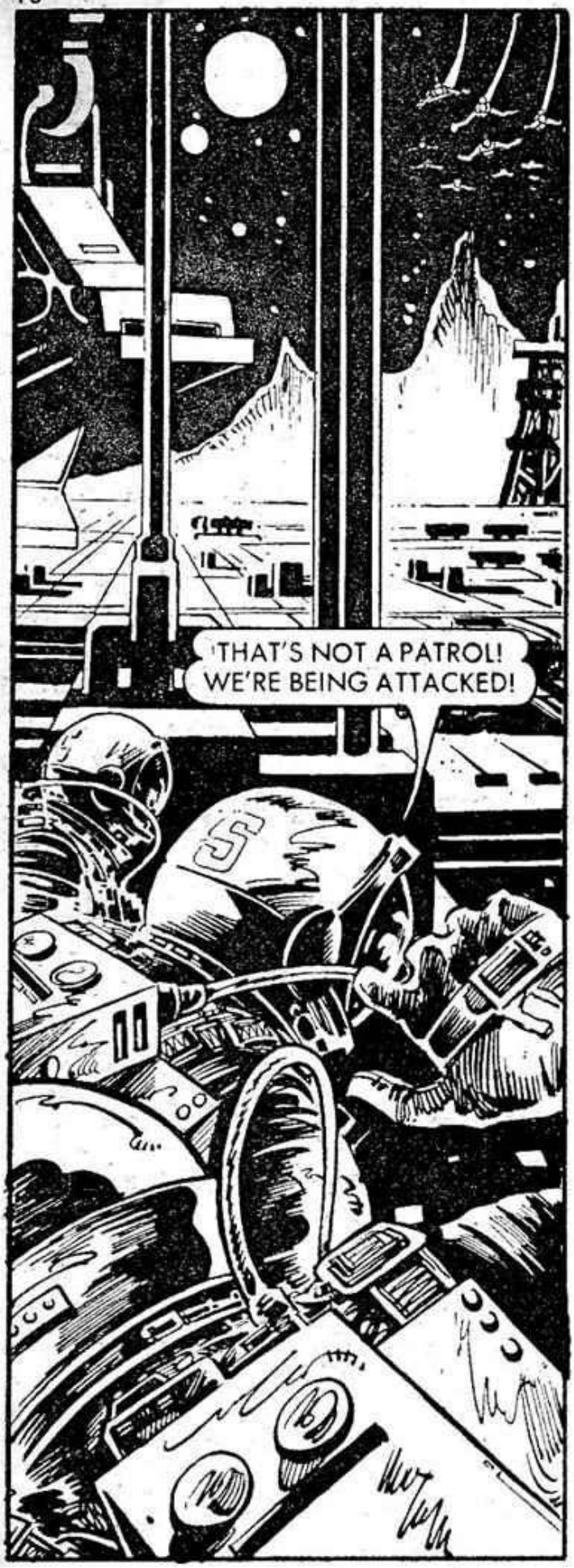

THE CESSATION OF COMMUNICATIONS WAS INVESTIGATED AND DULY REPORTED TO SPACE COMMAND HQ IN ORBIT OF NEPTUNE.
THAT'S THE FIFTH MINING COLONY TO HAVE BEEN ATTACKED, AND DESTROYED. BY THE TIME WE GET THERE, NO TRACE OF THE ATTACKERS CAN BE FOUND. GRAHAME AND EWING, YOUR JOB IS TO PATROL THE ASTEROID BELT OF TYR AND FIND OUT WHO OR WHAT IS DOING THE ATTACKING!
DO WE KNOW WHY THE COLONIES WERE ATTACKED, SIR?

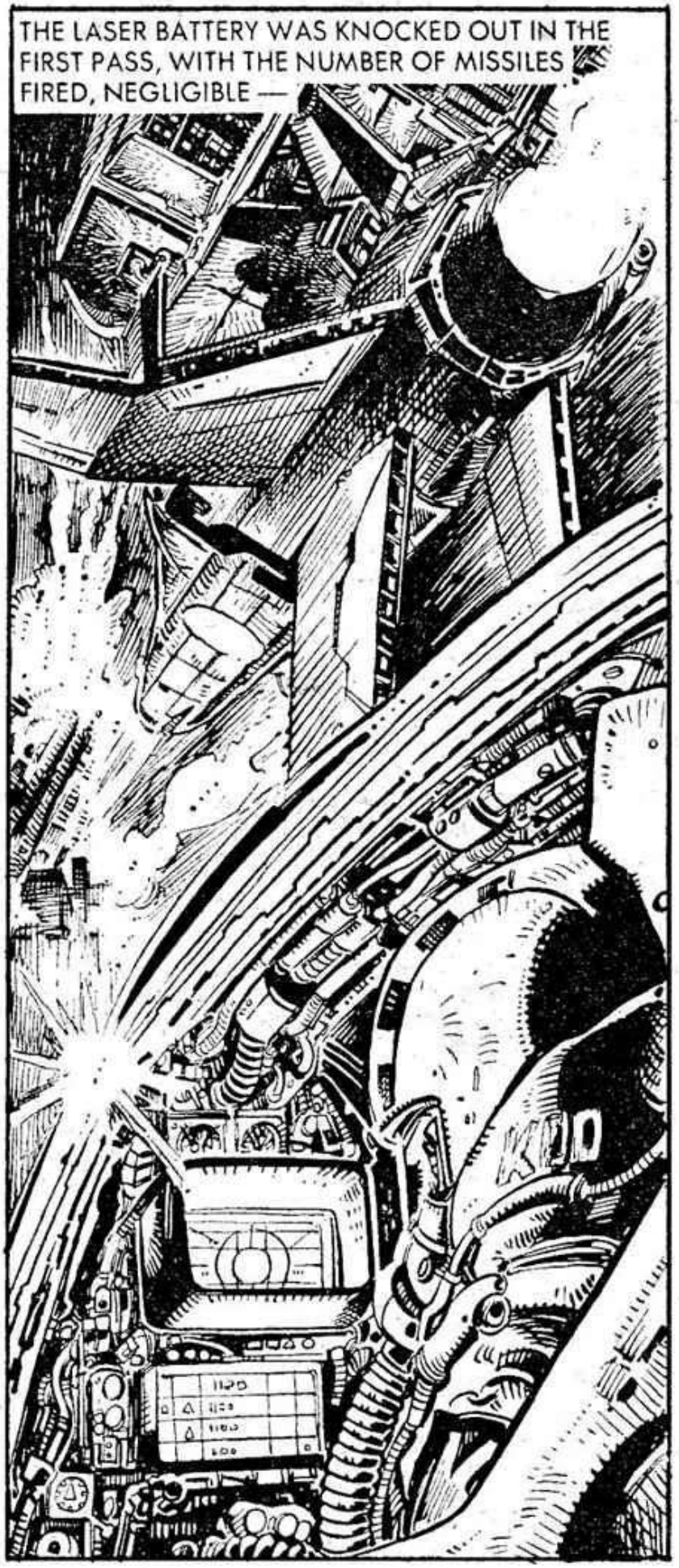
YES . . . FOR THE ASTRIUM. AT LEAST THAT'S ALL THAT IS TAKEN. HOWEVER, THE AMOUNT THEY HAVE TAKEN FAR EXCEEDS THEIR POSSIBLE NUMBER OF CRAFT.
CORPORAL GARETH EWING AND PRIVATE DAVID GRAHAME OF THE ELITE SPACE COMMANDO GROUP SET OUT ON THEIR LONELY TASK.
COMPUTER: LINES OPEN
ALL FACTOR ANALYSIS
ALL CODES APPLYSTOP
WHY IS ASTRIUM SO IMPORTANT ANYWAY?
IT HAS ANTI-GRAVITY PROPERTIES AND CAN PRODUCE VERY FAST CRAFT.

MANY LIGHT UNITS LATER THEY LANDED ON THE LARGEST ASTEROID IN THE TYR MINING BELT.
THE CHIEF OF THE COLONEY TOOK THE SPACERS TO AN ASTRIUM PIT.
THIS IS THE LARGEST MINE IN THE BELT. ASTRIUM IS RARE ELSEHWERE IN THE GALAXY, SO YOU SEE HOW IMPORTANT OUR OPERATION IS.
WHAT ARE YOUR DEFENCES?


THE CHIEF SHOWED THEM THE ANTI-SPACECRAFT LASER BATTERIES MANNED BY A GROUP OF SOLDIERS —
WE HAVE THESE BATTERIES OF ASL'S, AND IMPERIAL PATROLS IN THIS SECTOR ARE FREQUENT.
IT'S STILL A HUGE AREA TO TRY AND COVER, THOUGH. I DON'T THINK THE DEFENCES ARE ADEQUATE FOR THE KIND OF ATTACK THAT'S OCCURRED ALREADY.


AS THE TRIO TALKED, THE VERY SUBJECT OF THEIR DISCUSSION WAS WARPING IN —


THAT'S NOT A PATROL! WE'RE BEING ATTACKED!


THE LASER BATTERY WAS KNOCKED OUT IN THE FIRST PASS, WITH THE NUMBER OF MISSILES FIRED, NEGLIGIBLE —

WITHIN MINUTES, THE COLONY WAS BLASTED APART.
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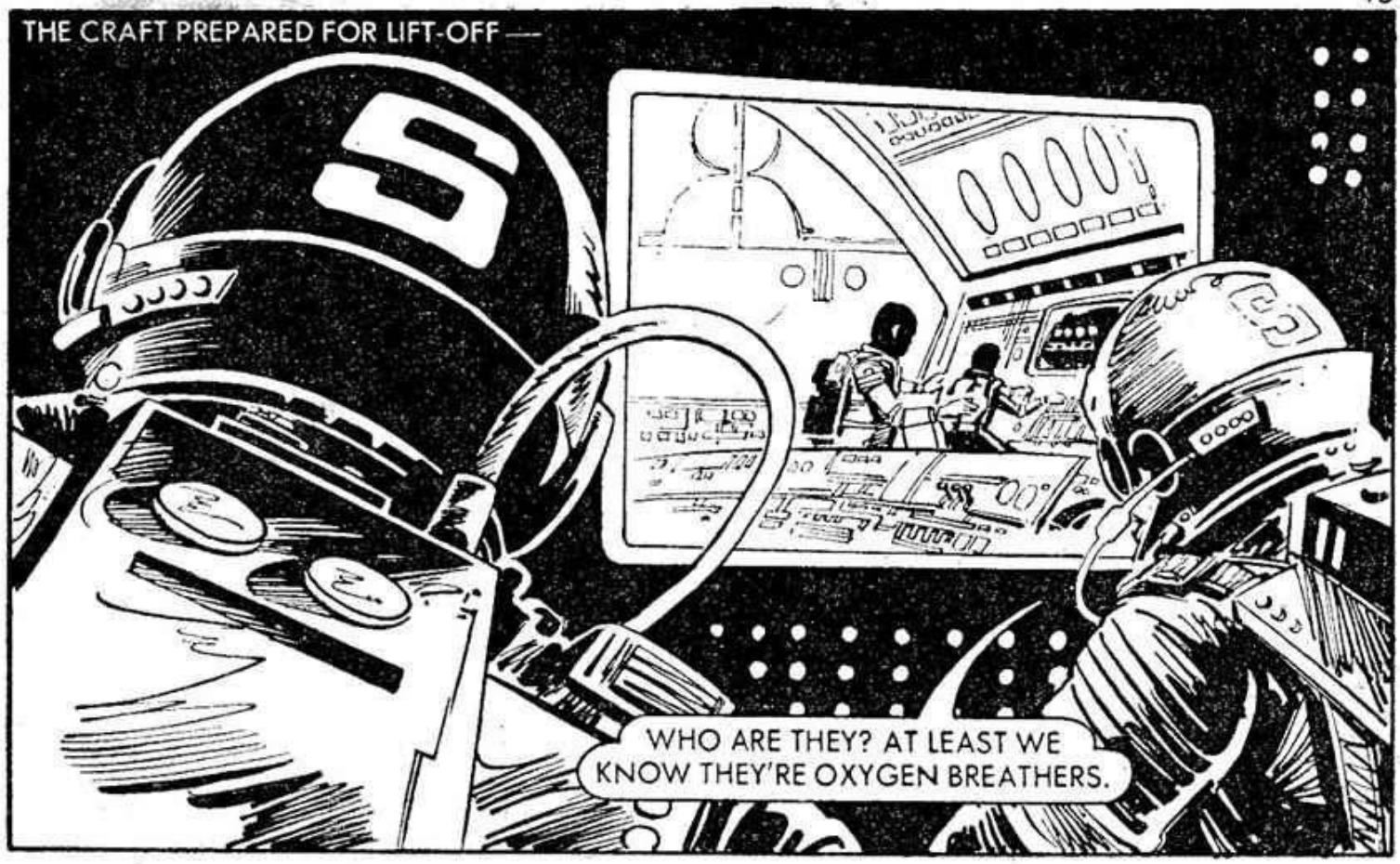
AS ALIEN TROOPS POURED INTO THE COLONY, A HANDFUL OF SURVIVORS OFFERED RESISTANCE.

THERE ARE TOO MANY OF THEM. WE'LL BE WIPED OUT BEFORE THE PATROLS GET HALF WAY HERE.
THEY WANT THE ASTRIUM SO THE FREIGHTER'S UNDAMAGED! WE'LL HAVE TO GET TO IT BEFORE THEM.
THE SURVIVORS SPRINTED FOR THE UNDAMAGED FREIGHTER.

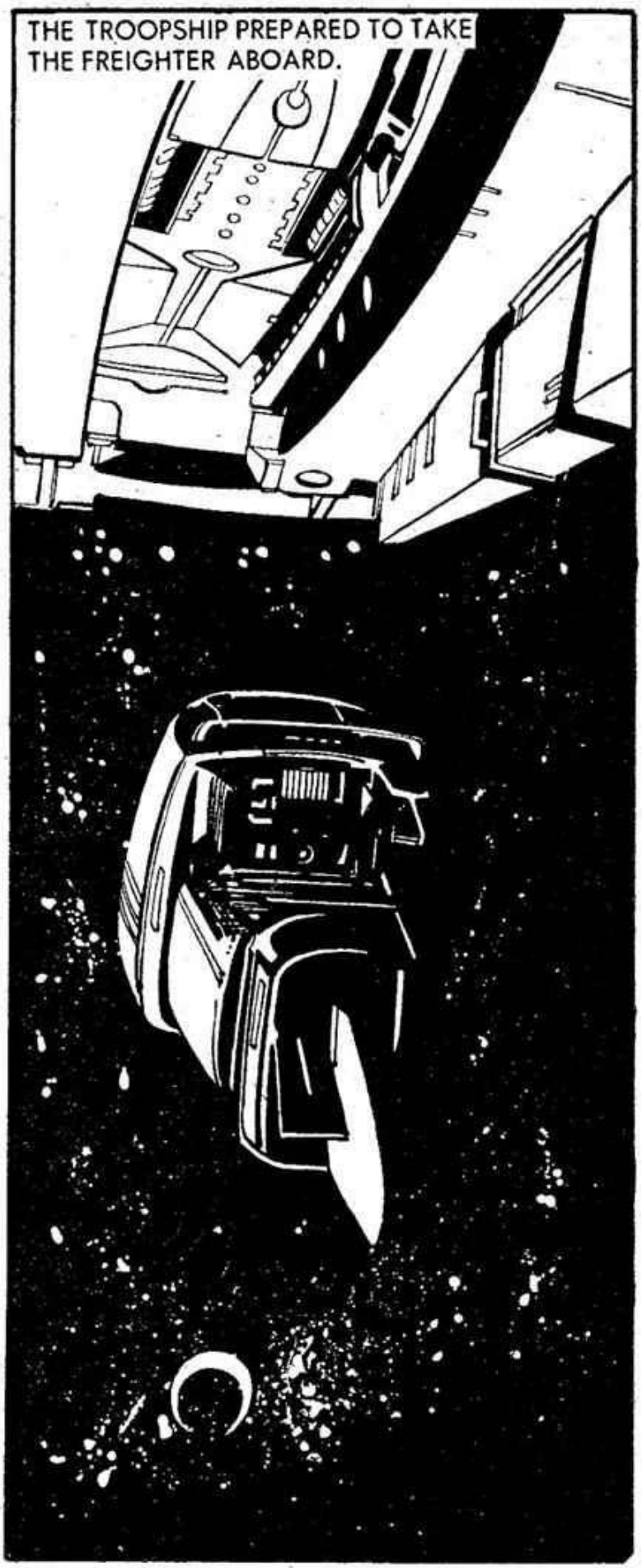
A NOVAFLASH INCINERATOR FINISHED ALL THE MINERS AND SCORCHED THE TWO COMMANDOS.
JUPE! WHO ARE THESE MURDERING THUGS?
SATURN KNOWS? BUT IF WE DON'T GET OUT OF HERE WE'LL SOON FIND OUT.

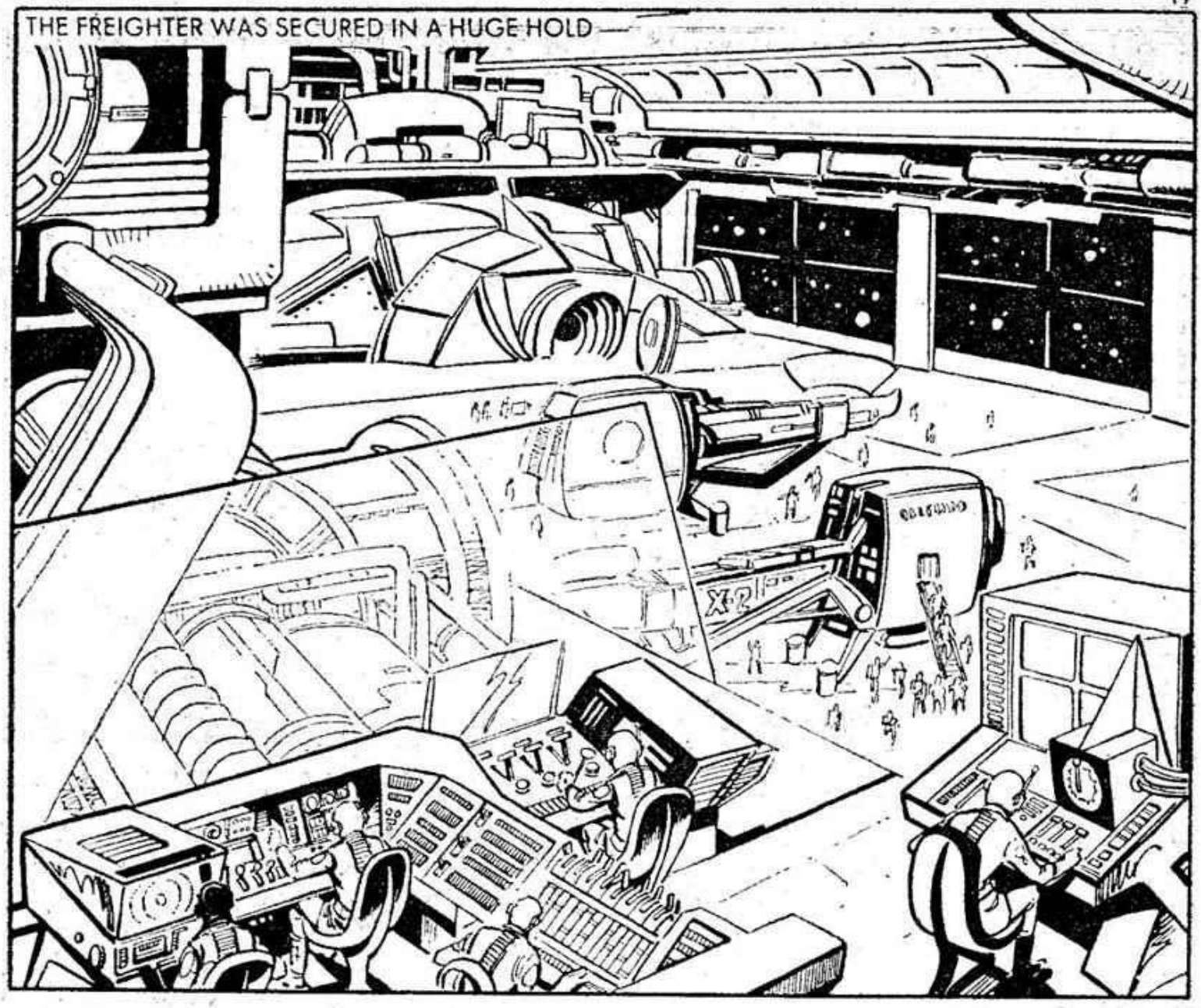
THE SPACERS CONCEALED THEMSELVES IN THE HOLD AS TWO ALIEN PILOTS CAME ABOARD.


THE CRAFT PREPARED FOR LIFT-OFF —
WHO ARE THEY? AT LEAST WE KNOW THEY'RE OXYGEN BREATHERS.

DAVID
WITH ALL THE MINERS DEAD, THE BEST WE CAN DO NOW IS LET THEM TAKE US TO THEIR BASE SO WE CAN PINPOINT IT.

THE ALIENS LEFT LONG BEFORE A TERRAN PATROL HAD EVEN RECEIVED THE MAYDAY.

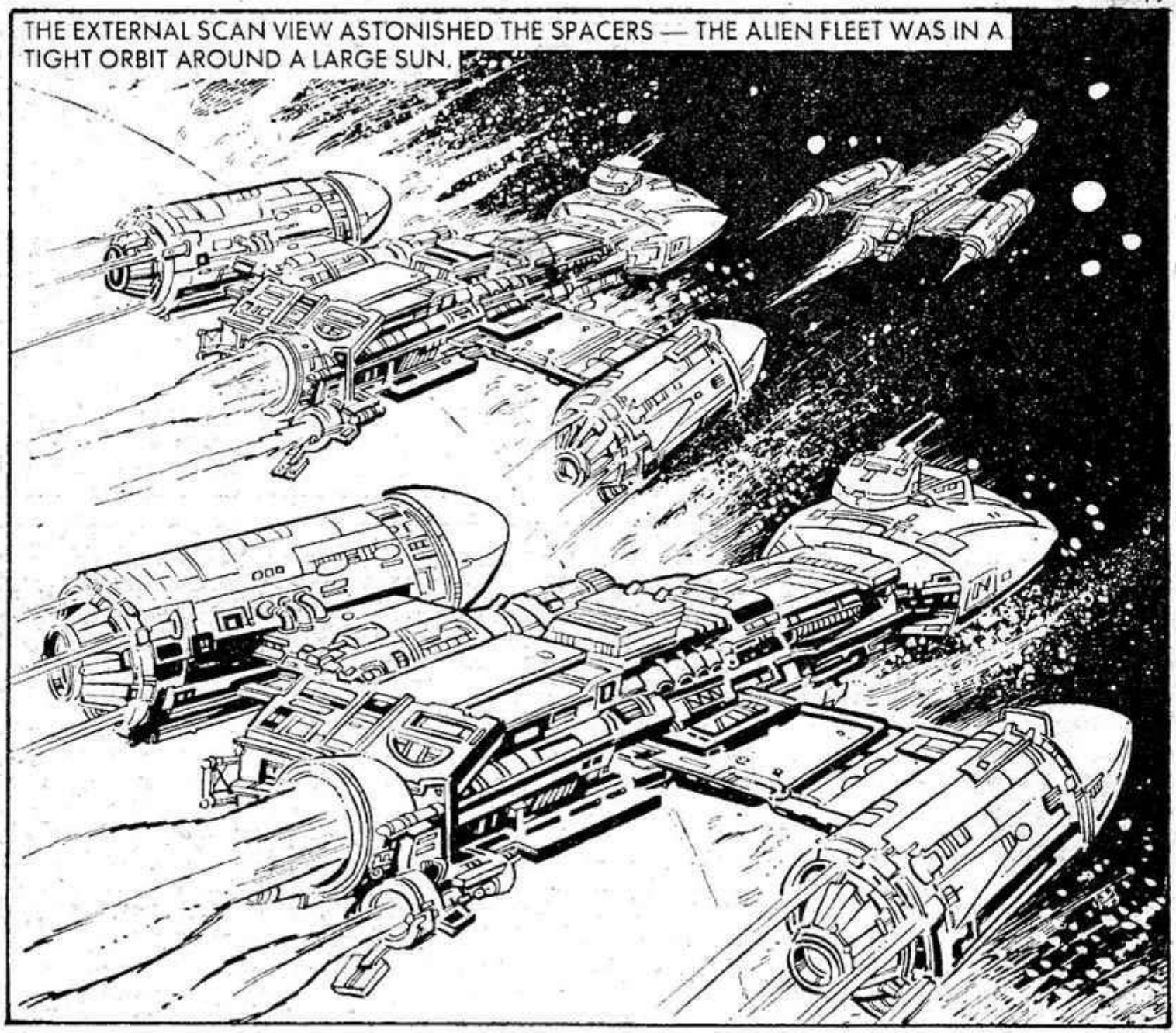

THE TROOPSHIP PREPARED TO TAKE THE FREIGHTER ABOARD.


THE FREIGHTER WAS SECURED IN A HUGE HOLD

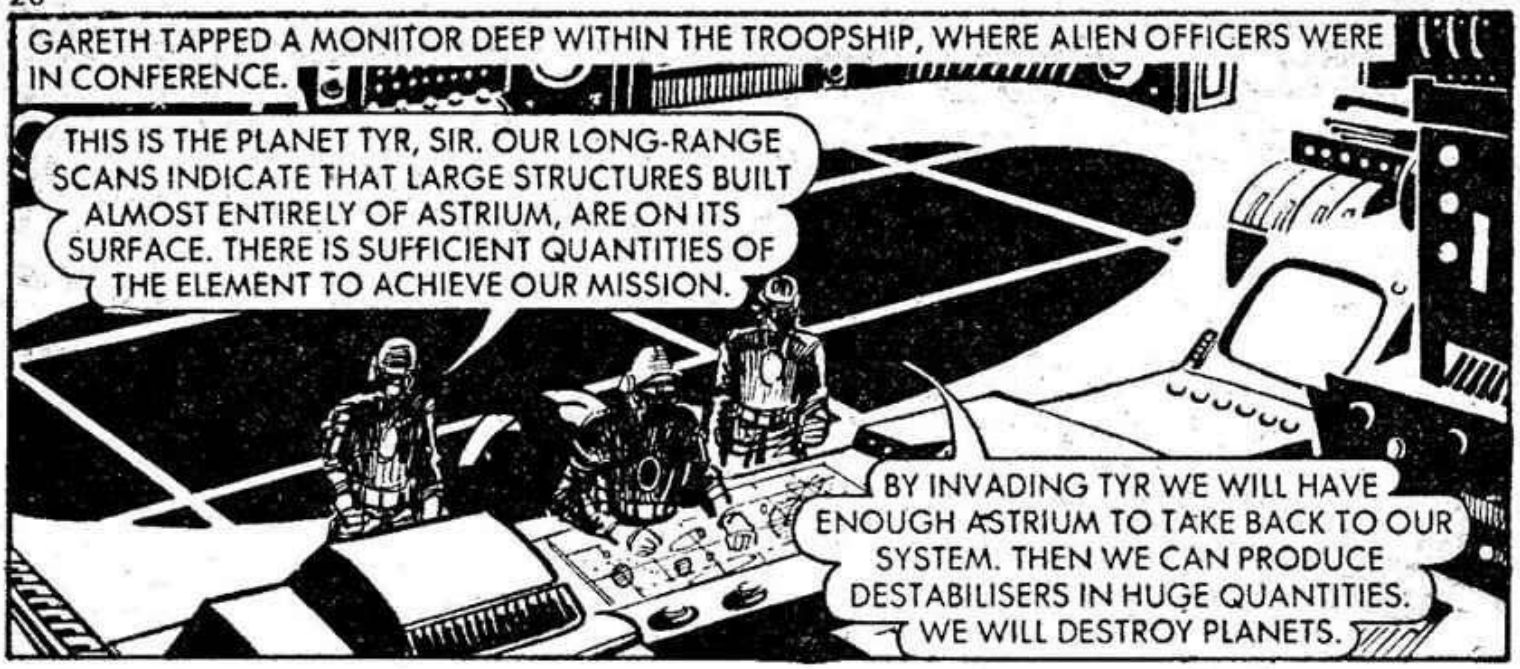
ONCE THE FREIGHTER WAS EMPTY, GARETH AND DAVID PREPARED TO INVESTIGATE.
LET'S SEE WHAT WE CAN PICK UP ON THE MONITORS.

THIS DOESN'T TELL US MUCH. WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?
I'M RE-WIRING THE MONITORS SO THAT THEY'RE TUNED TO THE ONBOARD SENSORS OF THE TROOPSHIP. I'LL NEED SOME COMPONENTS FROM YOUR EMERGENCY KIT.

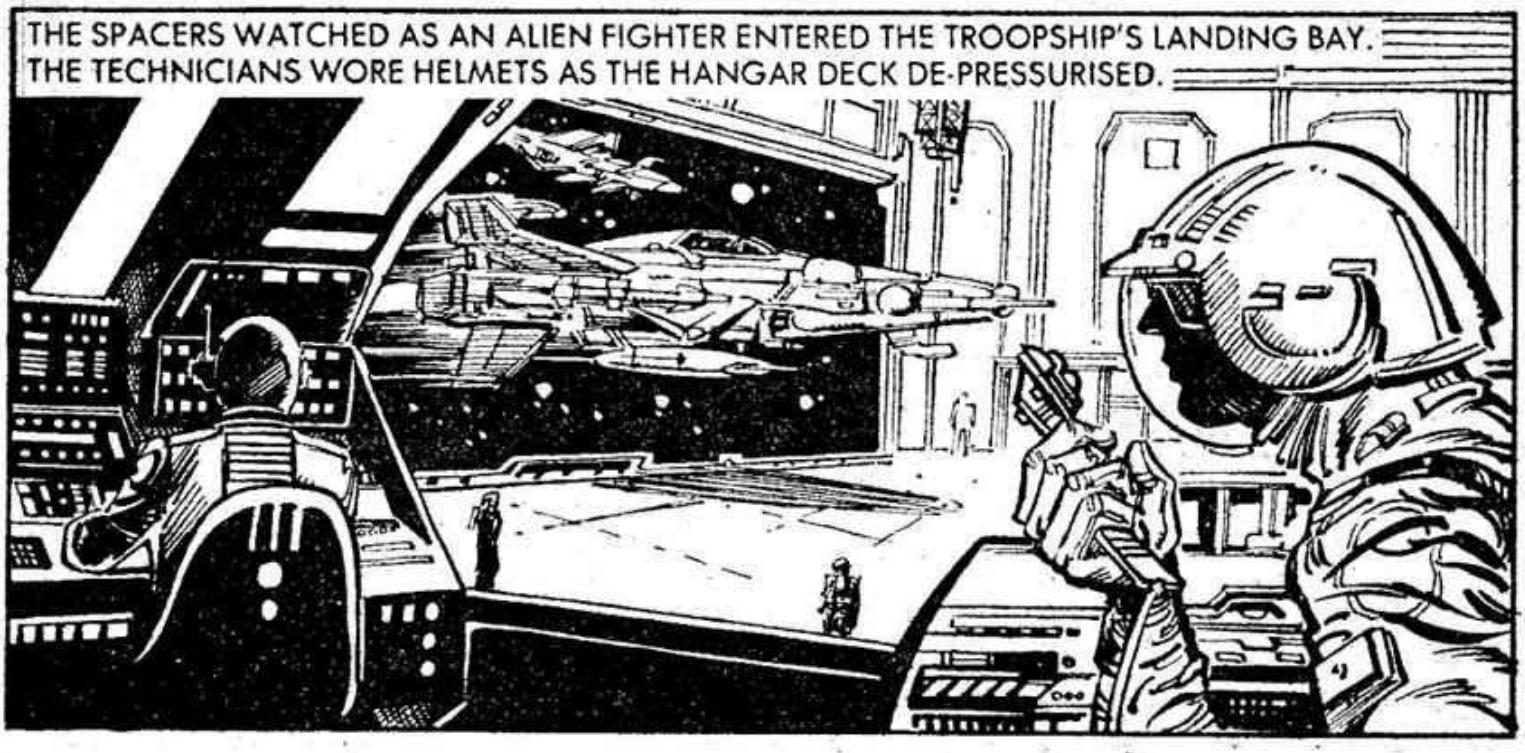
THAT OUGHT TO DO IT.
SEE IF YOU CAN TAP THE EXTERNAL SCANNERS TO CHECK OUR POSITION IN SPACE.


THE EXTERNAL SCAN VIEW ASTONISHED THE SPACERS — THE ALIEN FLEET WAS IN A TIGHT ORBIT AROUND A LARGE SUN.

THESE ALIEN SHIPS HAVE SOMETHING THAT ENABLES THEM TO WITHSTAND GREAT HEAT.
ASTRIUM! IT MUST ALSO REPEL HEAT ENABLING THOSE CRAFT TO ORBIT WITHIN THE AREA BLIND TO OUR SENSORS.

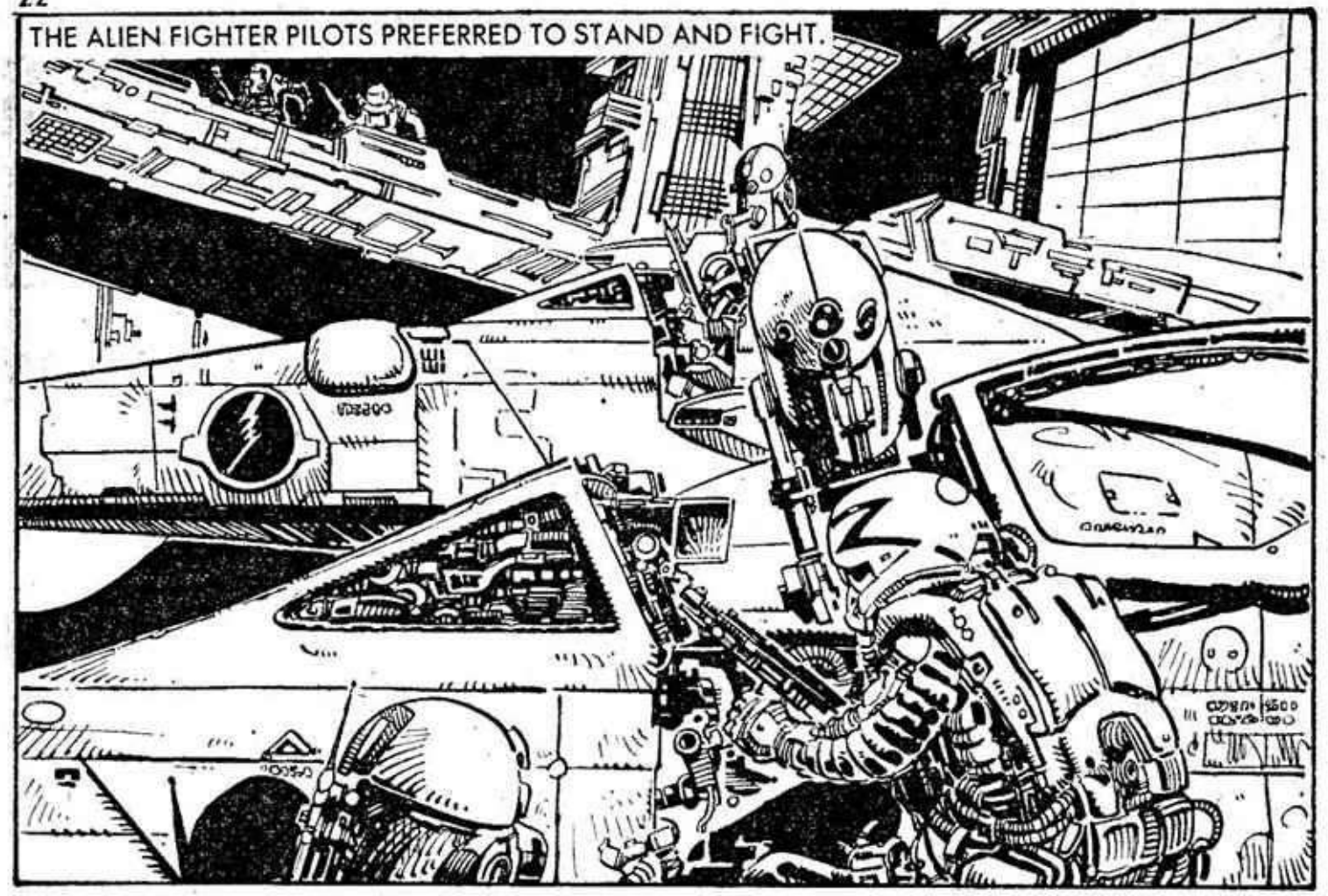

GARETH TAPPED A MONITOR DEEP WITHIN THE TROOPSHIP, WHERE ALIEN OFFICERS WERE IN CONFERENCE.
THIS IS THE PLANET TYR, SIR. OUR LONG-RANGE SCANS INDICATE THAT LARGE STRUCTURES BUILT ALMOST ENTIRELY OF ASTRIUM, ARE ON ITS SURFACE. THERE IS SUFFICIENT QUANTITIES OF THE ELEMENT TO ACHIEVE OUR MISSION.
BY INVADING TYR WE WILL HAVE ENOUGH ASTRIUM TO TAKE BACK TO OUR SYSTEM. THEN WE CAN PRODUCE DESTABILISERS IN HUGE QUANTITIES. WE WILL DESTROY PLANETS.

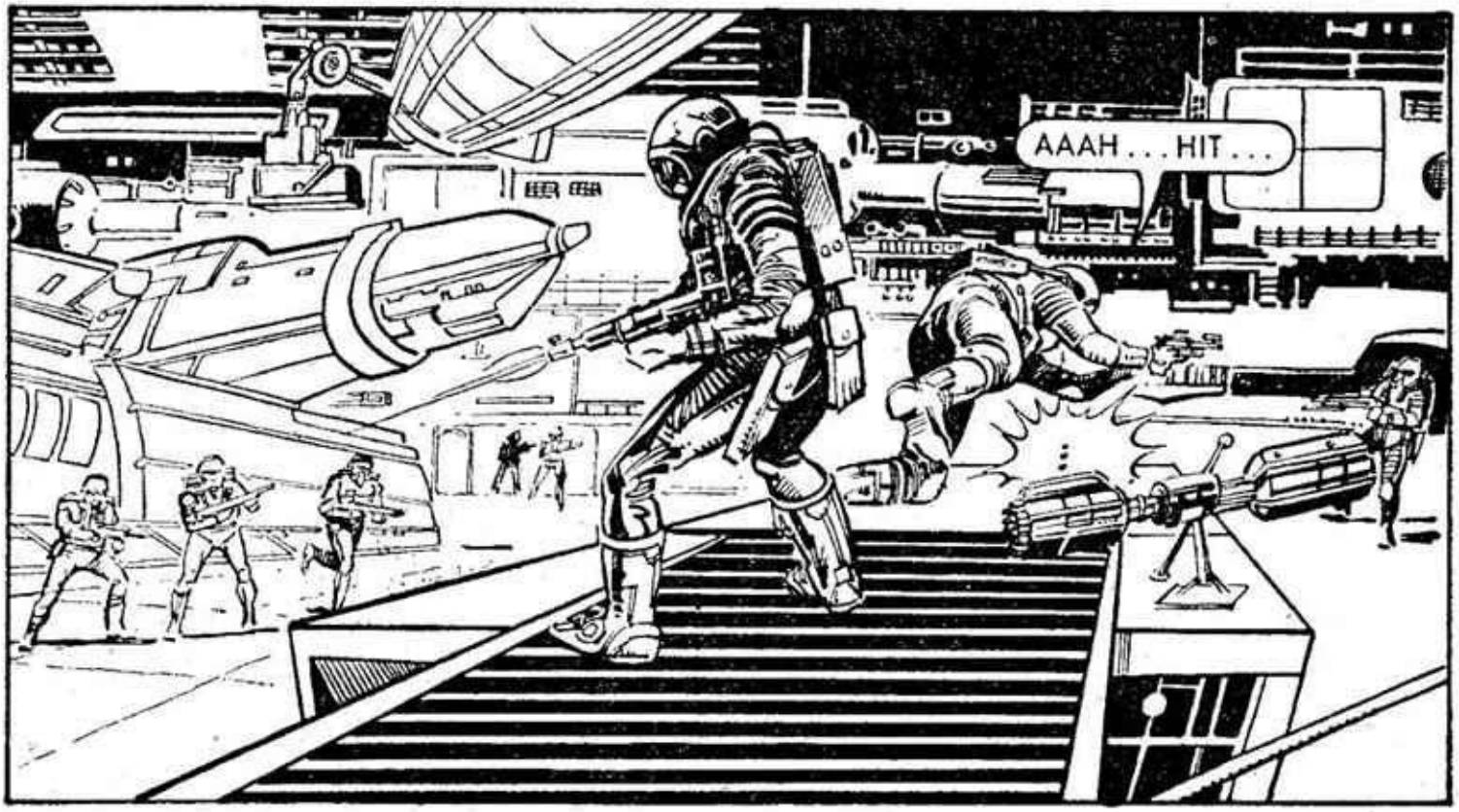
DESTROY PLANETS? HOW?
DESTABILISERS . . . THEY WOULD SEED THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE VICTIM PLANET WITH ASTRIUM. ONE BURST OF LASER FIRE WOULD ACTIVATE THE ANTI-GRAV PROPERTIES OF ASTRIUM, AND RESULT IN AN ORBITAL CHANGE WHICH COULD CAUSE THE PLANET TO DISINTEGRATE.

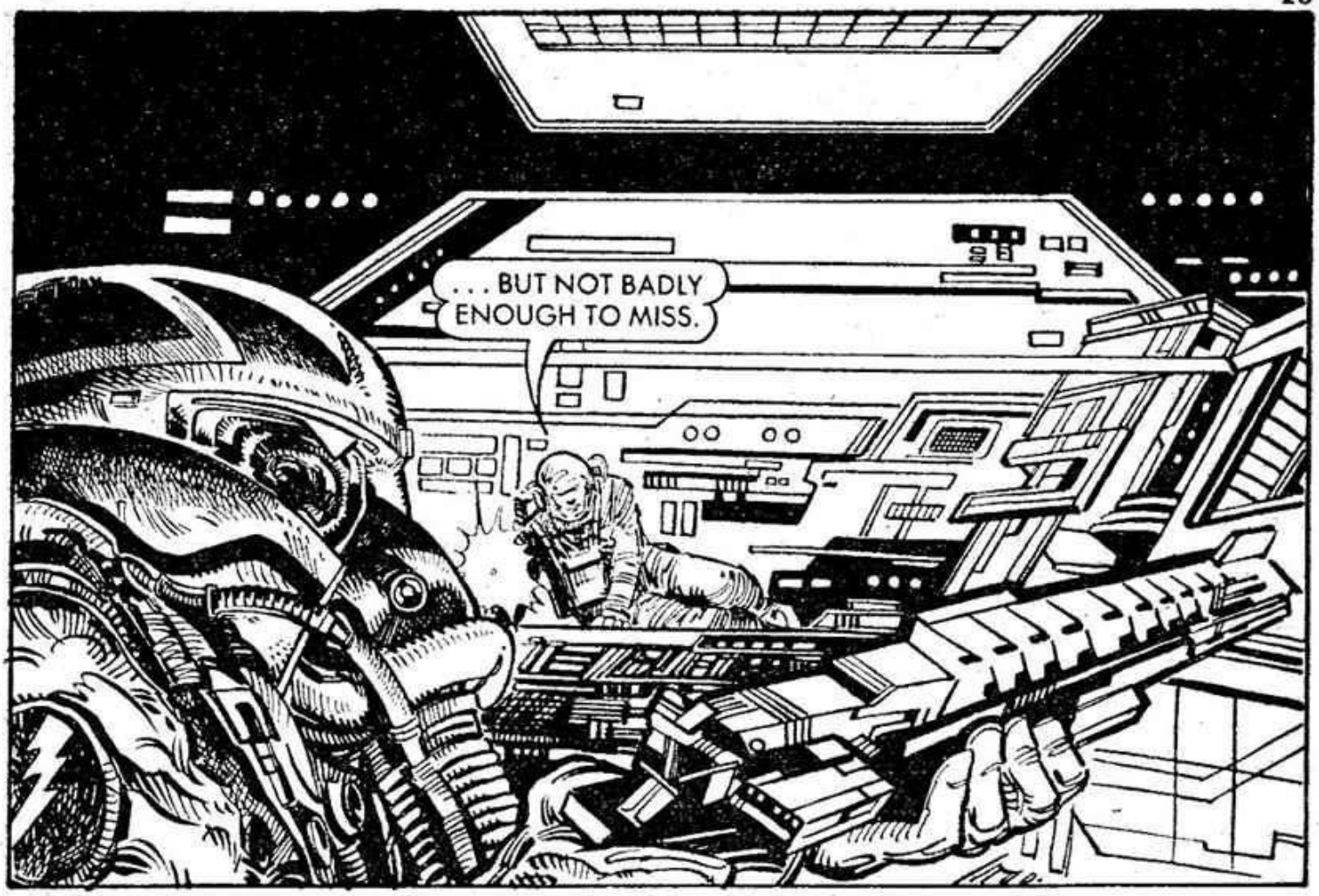

THE SPACERS WATCHED AS AN ALIEN FIGHTER ENTERED THE TROOPSHIP'S LANDING BAY. THE TECHNICIANS WORE HELMETS AS THE HANGAR DECK DE-PRESSURISED.

THINK WE CAN FLY THAT FIGHTER?
YES! THE HARD PART IS GETTING TO IT.

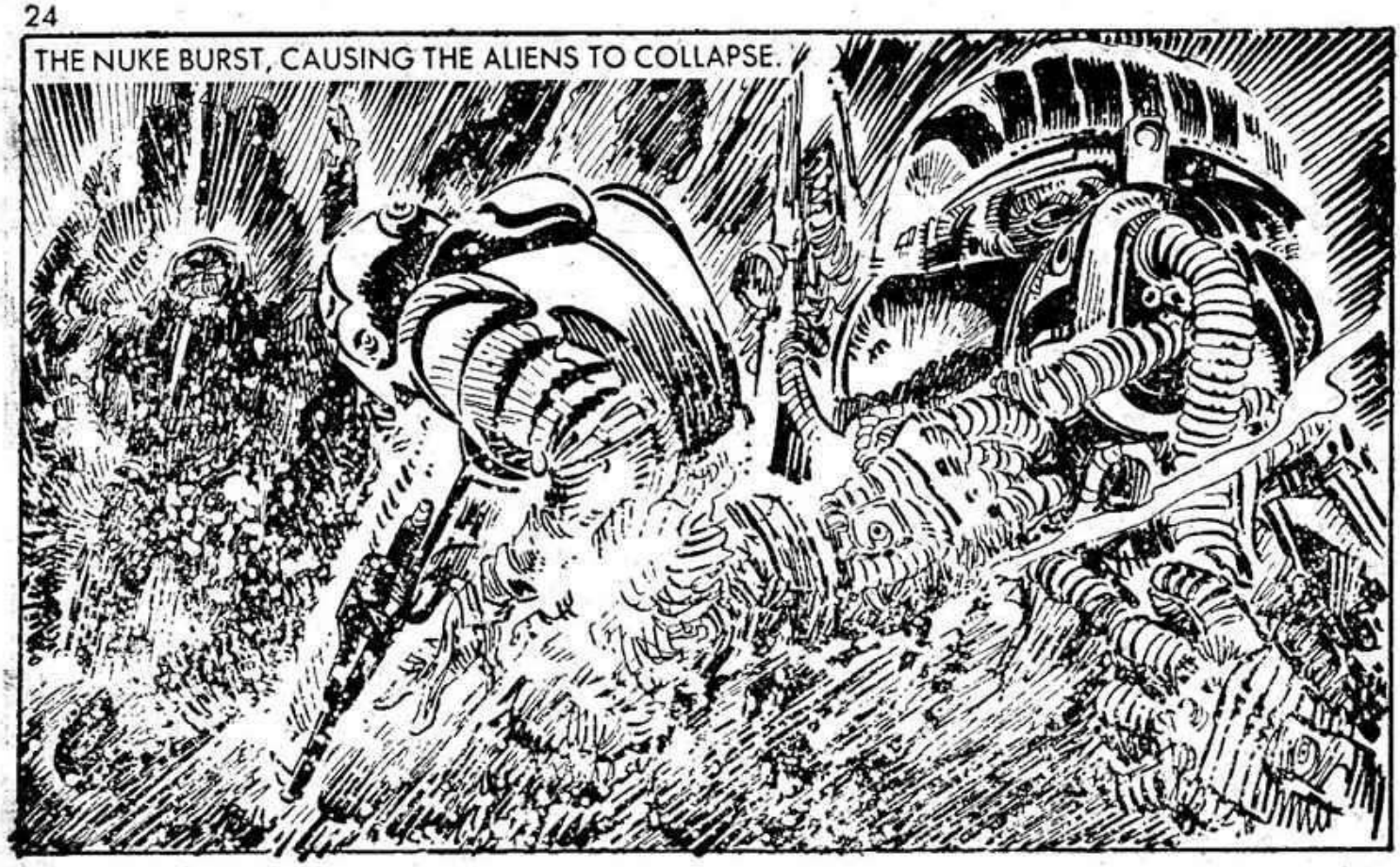
HURRY!

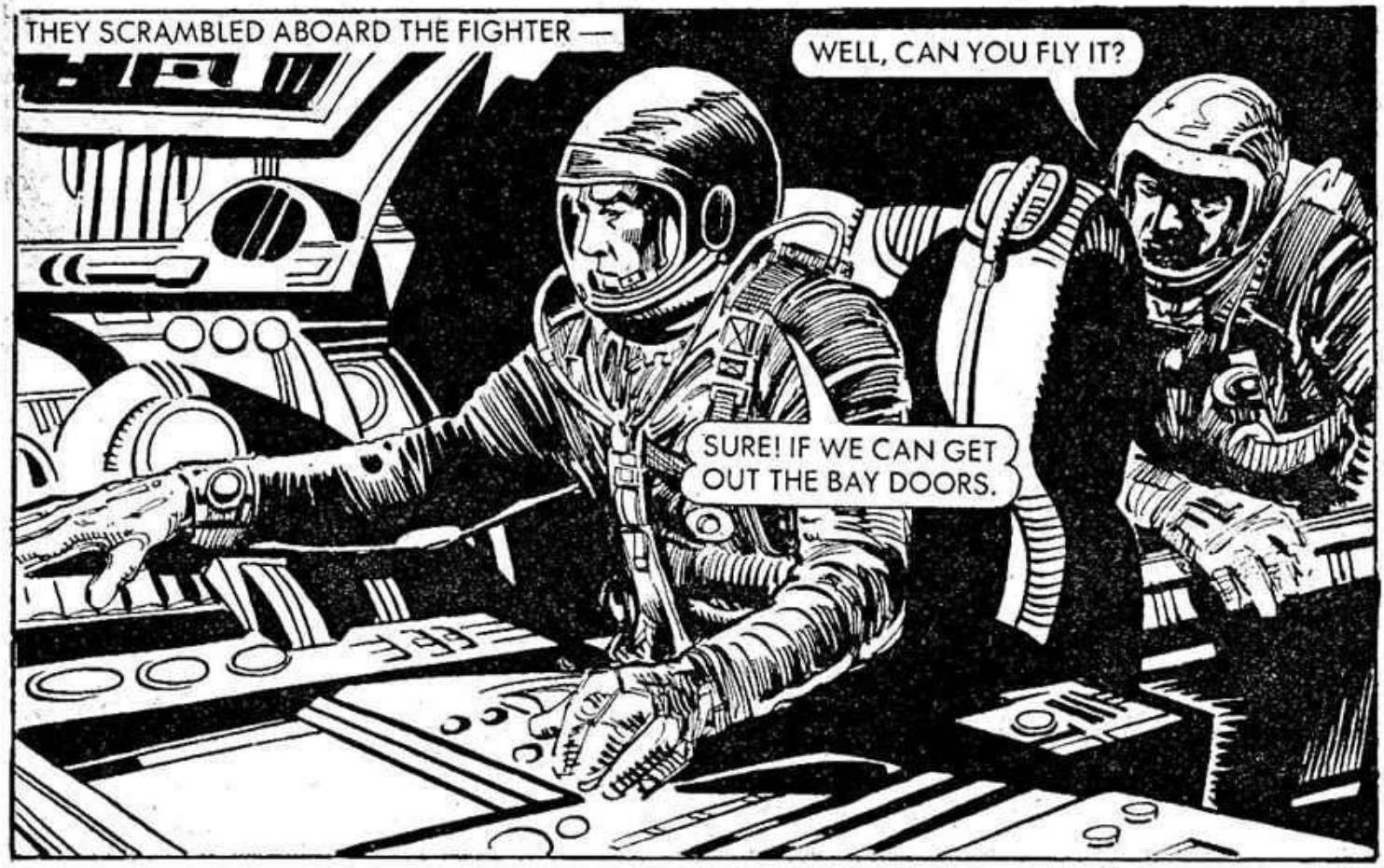

THE ALIEN FIGHTER PILOTS PREFERRED TO STAND AND FIGHT.

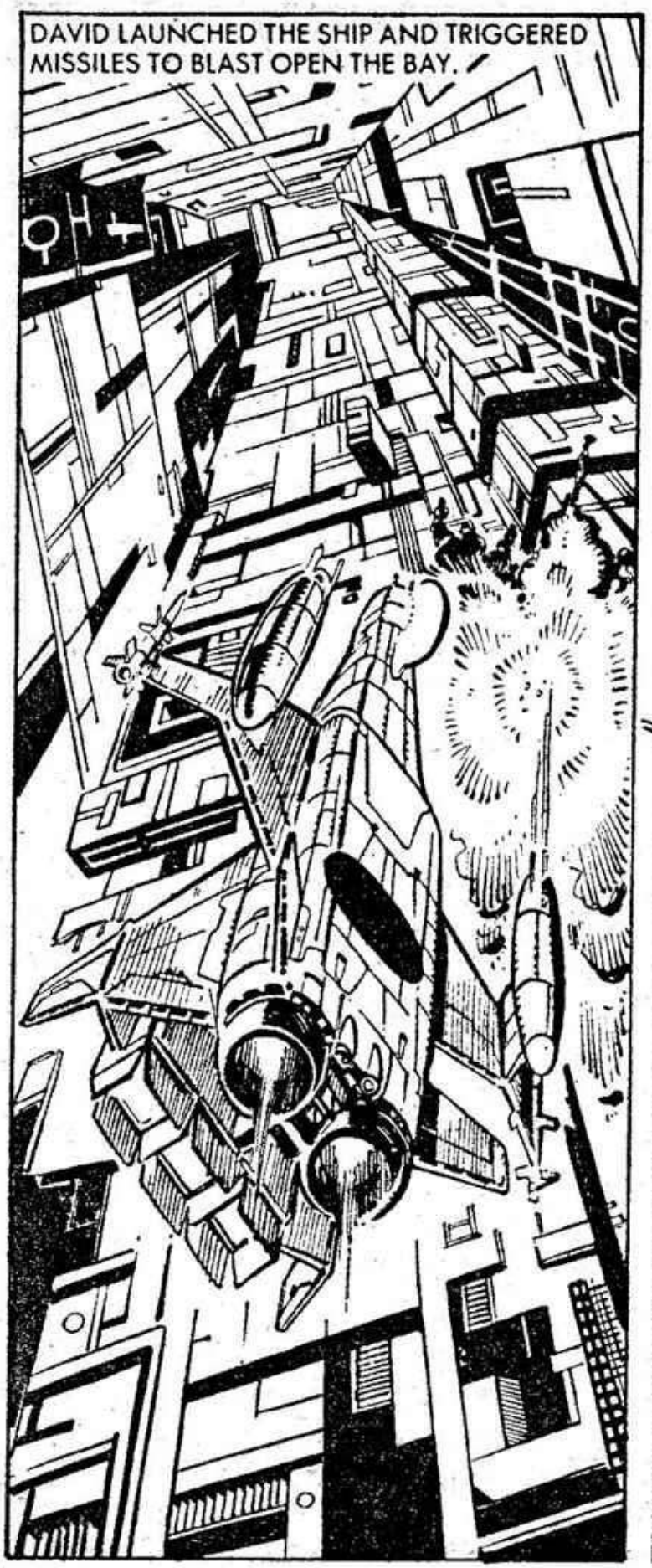

AAAH . . . HIT . . .

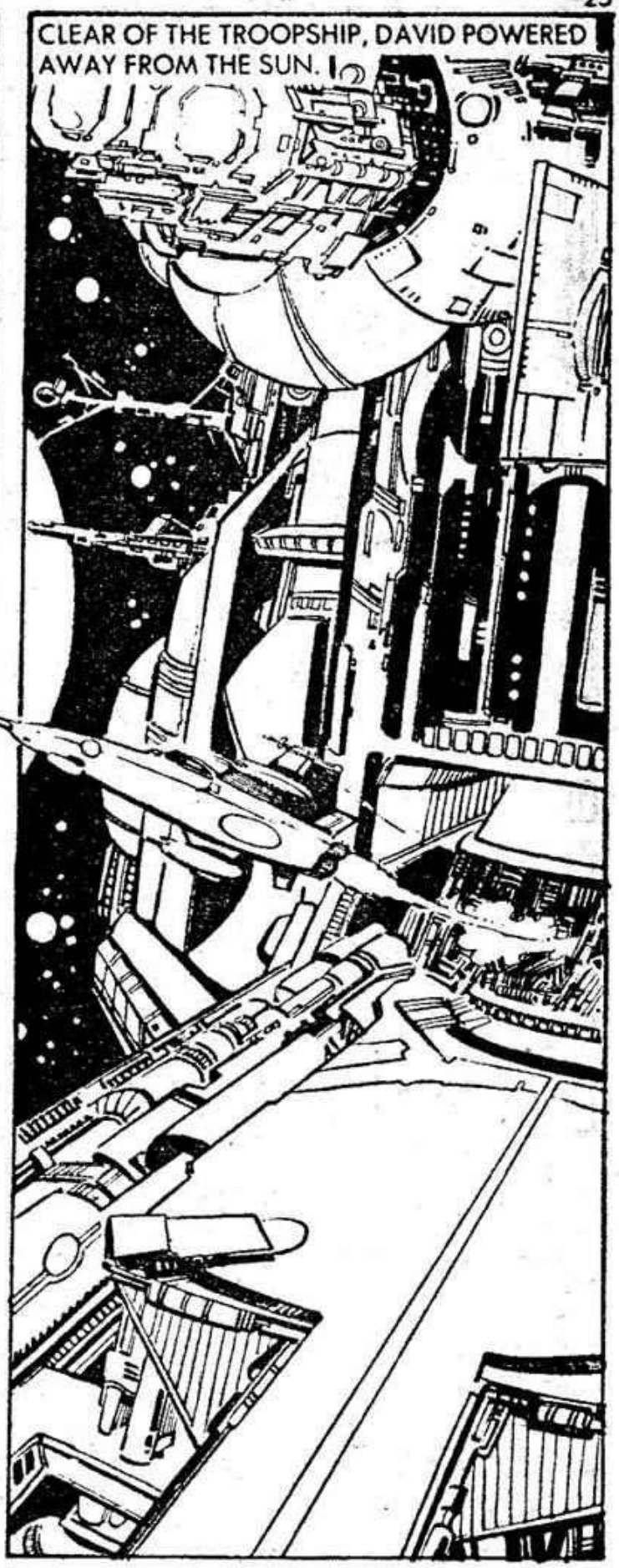


GARETH THREW A CONCUSSION-NUKE OVER THE HEADS OF THE REGROUPING SOLDIERS.


THE NUKE BURST, CAUSING THE ALIENS TO COLLAPSE.


THEY SCRAMBLED ABOARD THE FIGHTER —
WELL, CAN YOU FLY IT?
SURE! IF WE CAN GET OUT THE BAY DOORS.

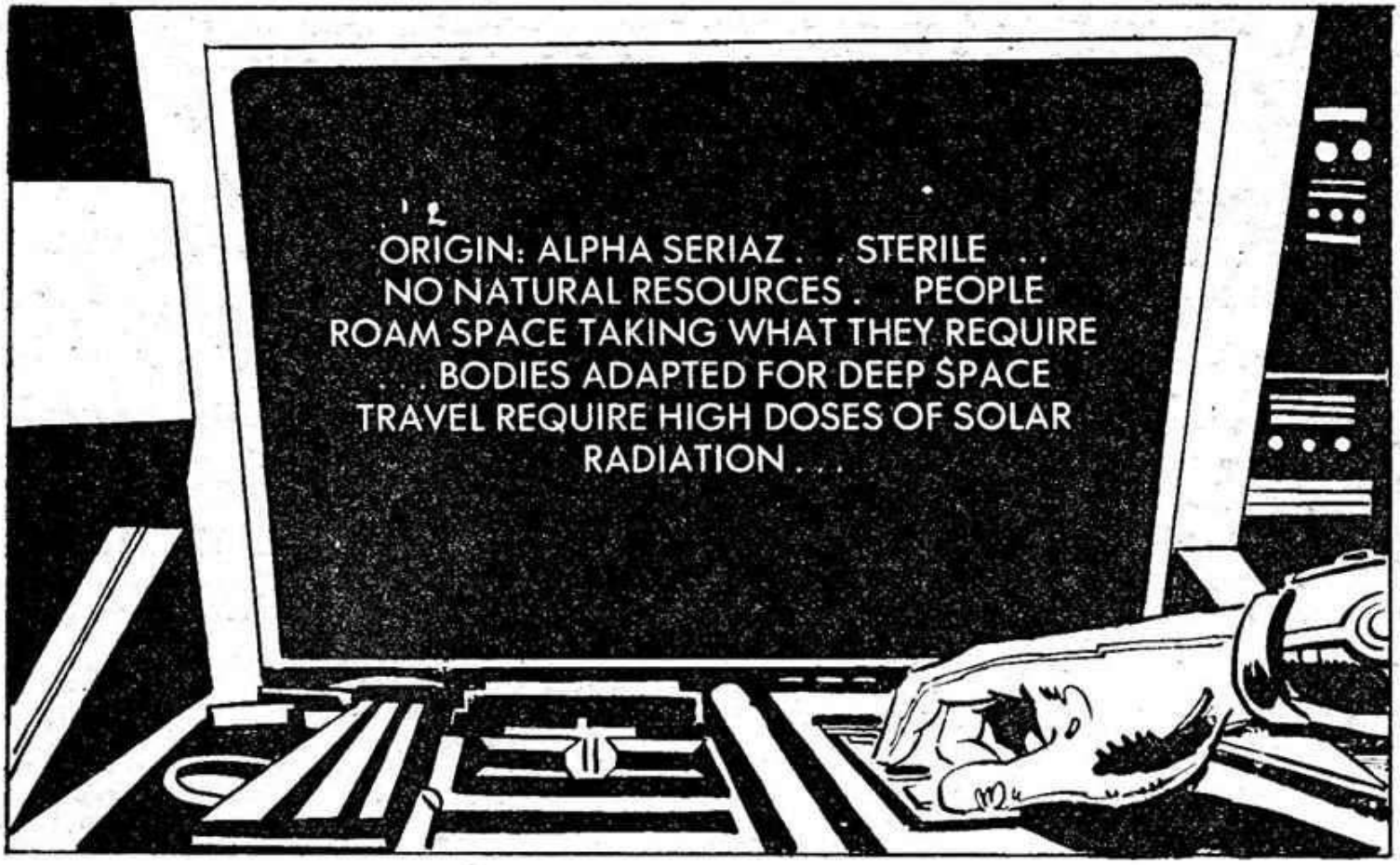

DAVID LAUNCHED THE SHIP AND TRIGGERED MISSILES TO BLAST OPEN THE BAY.


CLEAR OF THE TROOPSHIP, DAVID POWERED AWAY FROM THE SUN.

ON THE ALIEN TROOPSHIP —
THE HUMANS HAVE ESCAPED, SIR, AND DAMAGED THE HANGAR DECK.
LAUNCH FIGHTERS TO PURSUE AND DESTROY THEM. HAVE THE DAMAGE REPAIRED IMMEDIATELY. WE SHALL ATTACK TYR, NOW, BEFORE THEY CAN PREPARE FOR US.

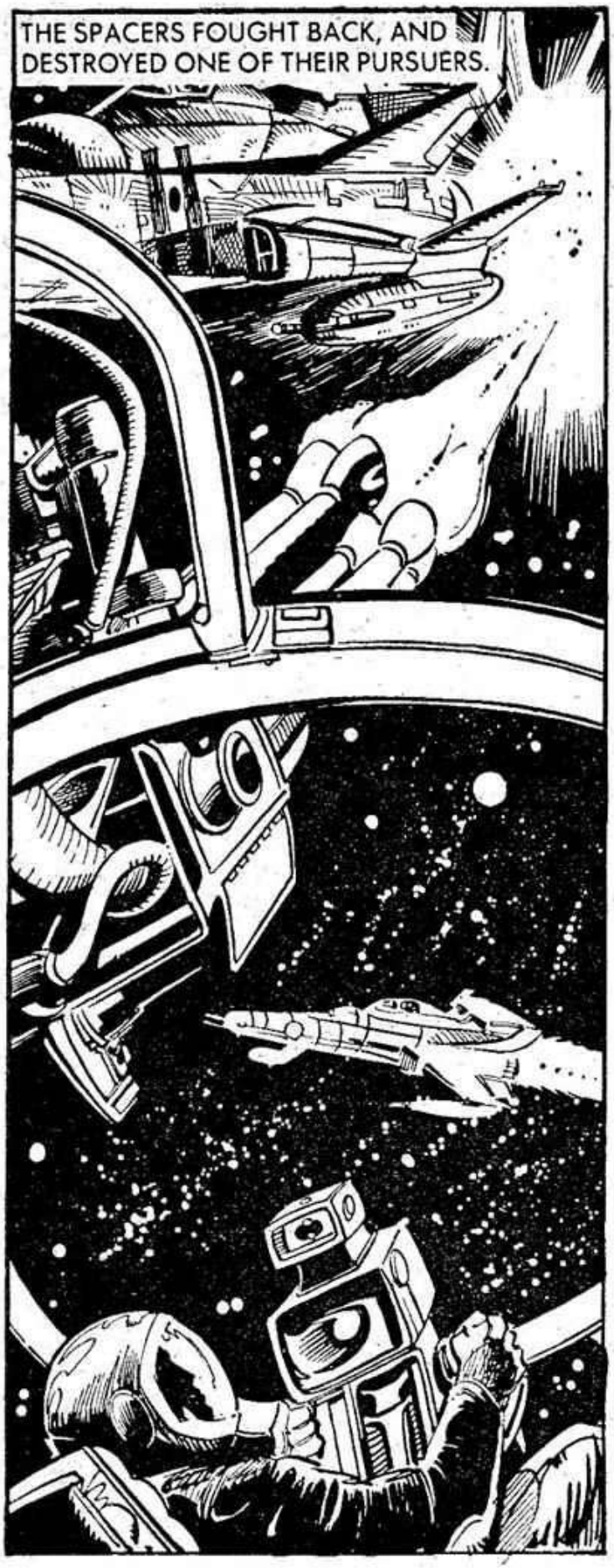
ON THE STOLEN FIGHTER —
I'M PICKING UP FOUR SHIPS LEAVING THE ALIEN FLEET AT HIGH SPEED. CHASING US, NO DOUBT.
NO WONDER THE ALIENS COULDN'T BE FOUND — NESTLING NEAR THE SURFACE OF A SUN, OUR DETECTORS COULDN'T MAKE THEM OUT.

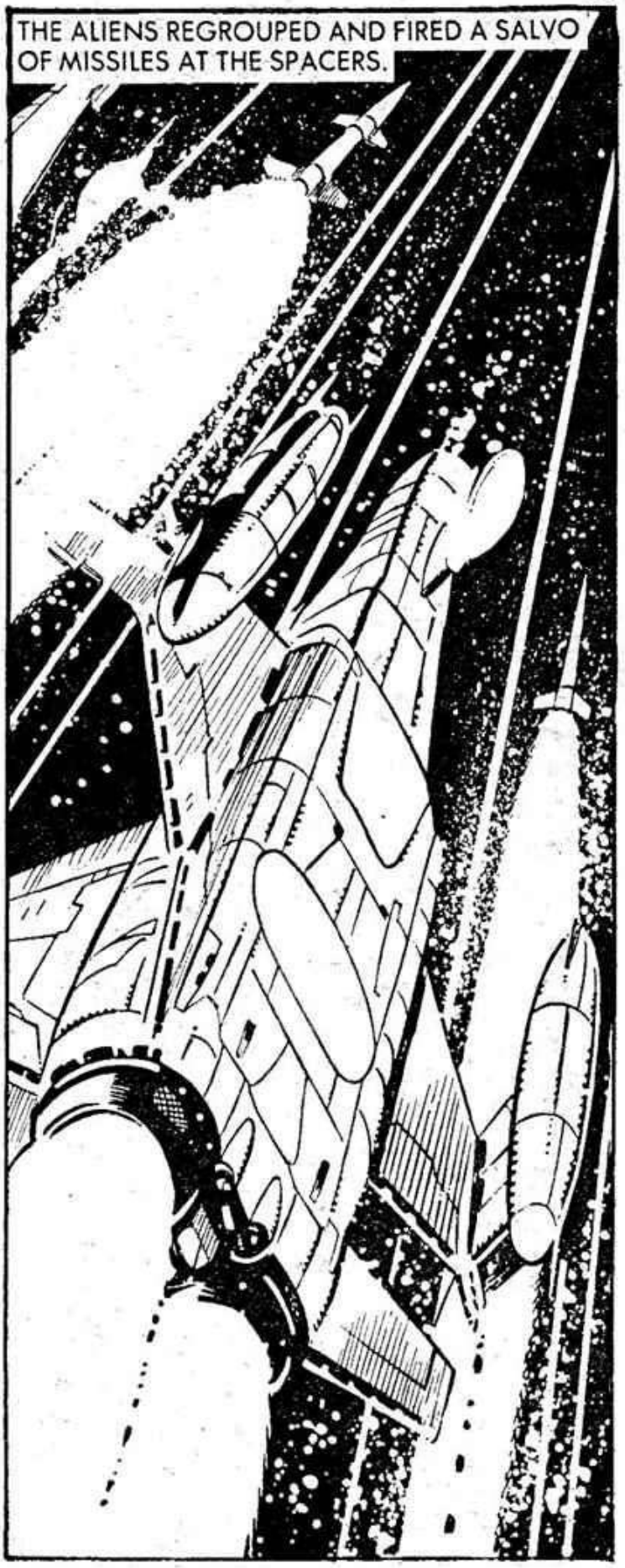
NOW TO FIND OUT WHO THOSE ALIENS ARE?

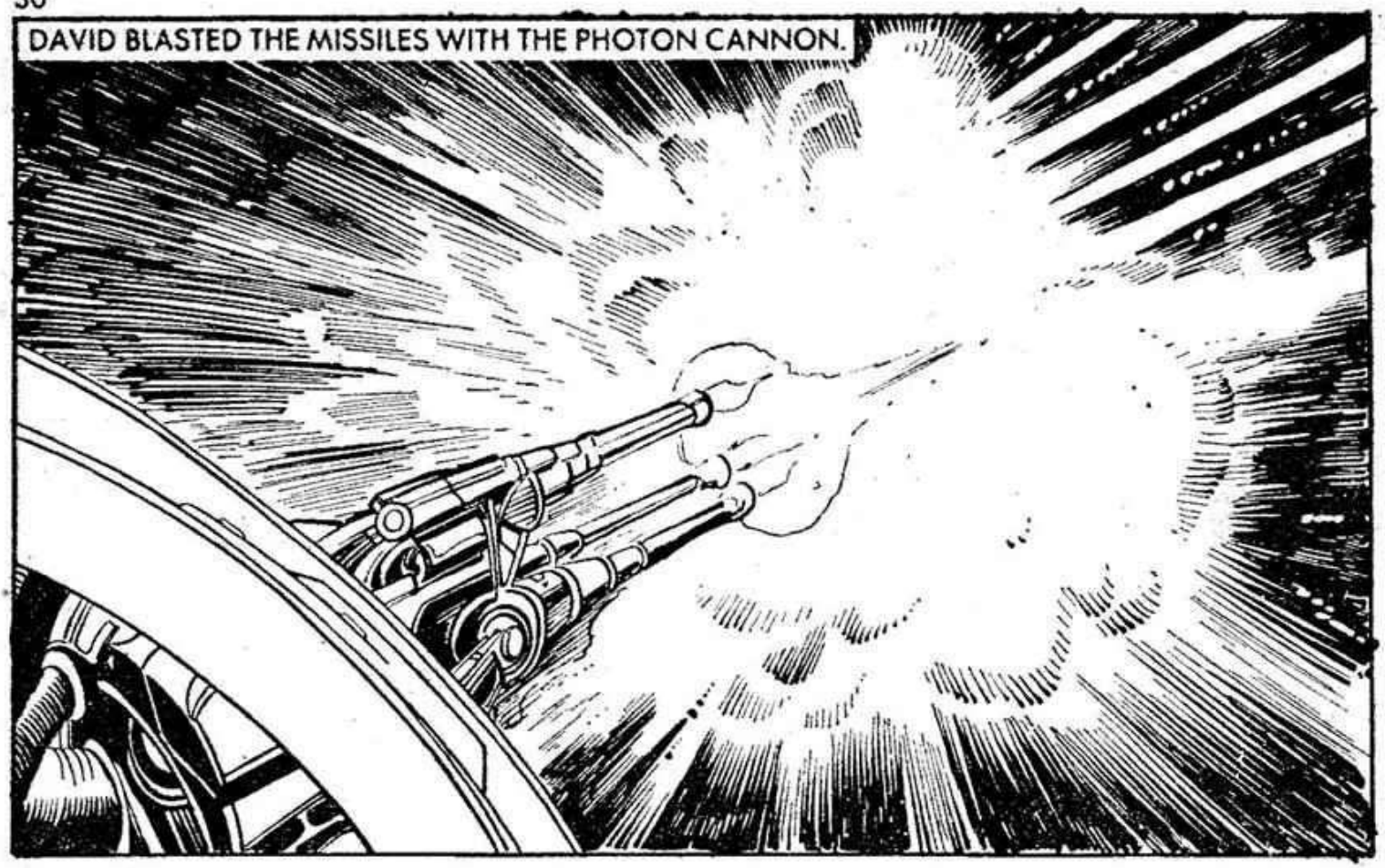

ORIGIN: ALPHA SERIAZ . . . STERILE . . NO NATURAL RESOURCES . . PEOPLE ROAM SPACE TAKING WHAT THEY REQUIRE . . . BODIES ADAPTED FOR DEEP SPACE TRAVEL REQUIRE HIGH DOSES OF SOLAR RADIATION . . .

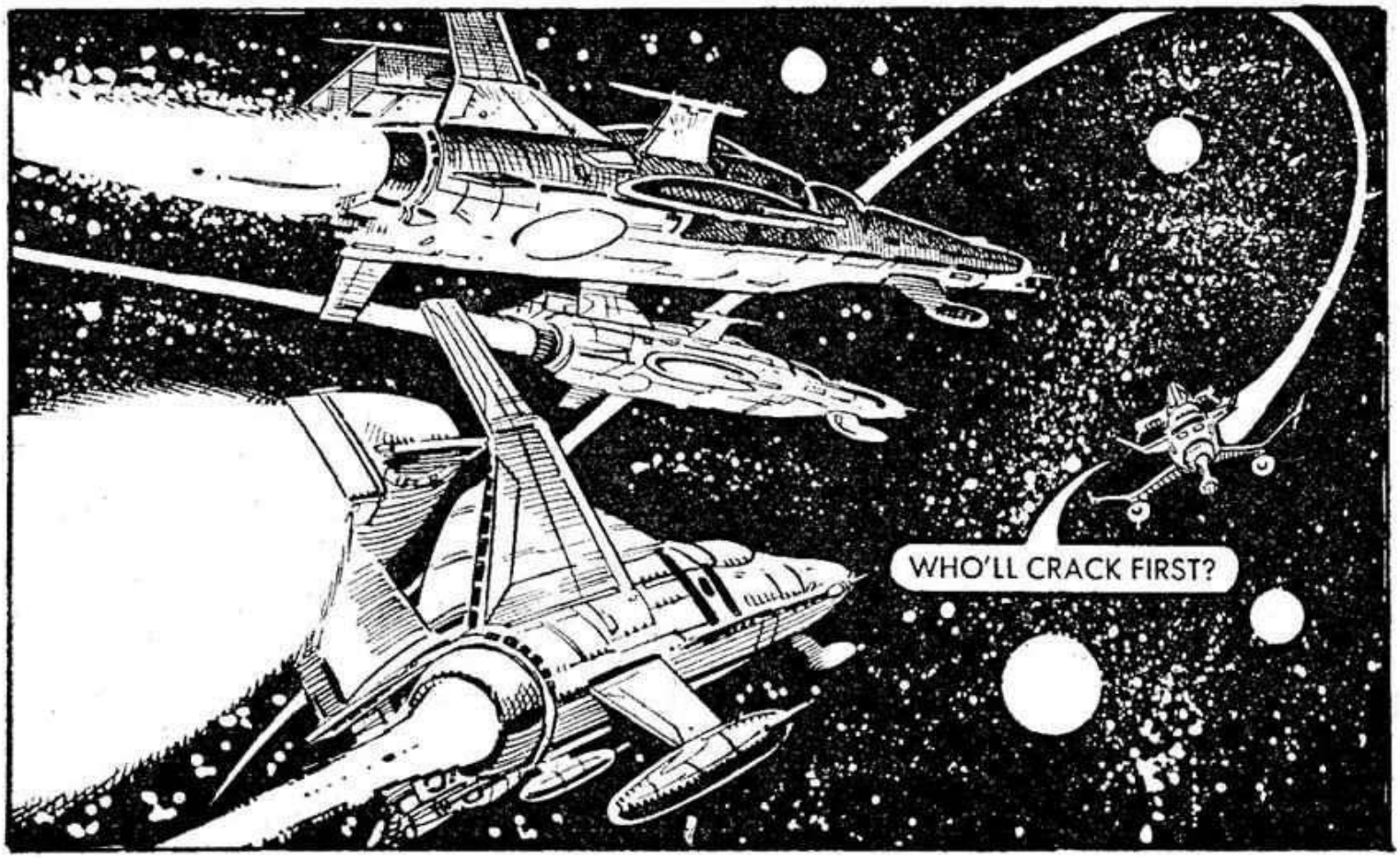
WE'LL HAVE TO LEAD THEM WITHIN RANGE OF SPACER PATROLS.

THE ALIEN FIGHTERS CLOSED IN —
TOO LATE — WE'VE GOT THEM ON EITHER SIDE OF US — WE'LL HAVE TO FIGHT NOW.


THE SPACERS FOUGHT BACK, AND DESTROYED ONE OF THEIR PURSUERS.

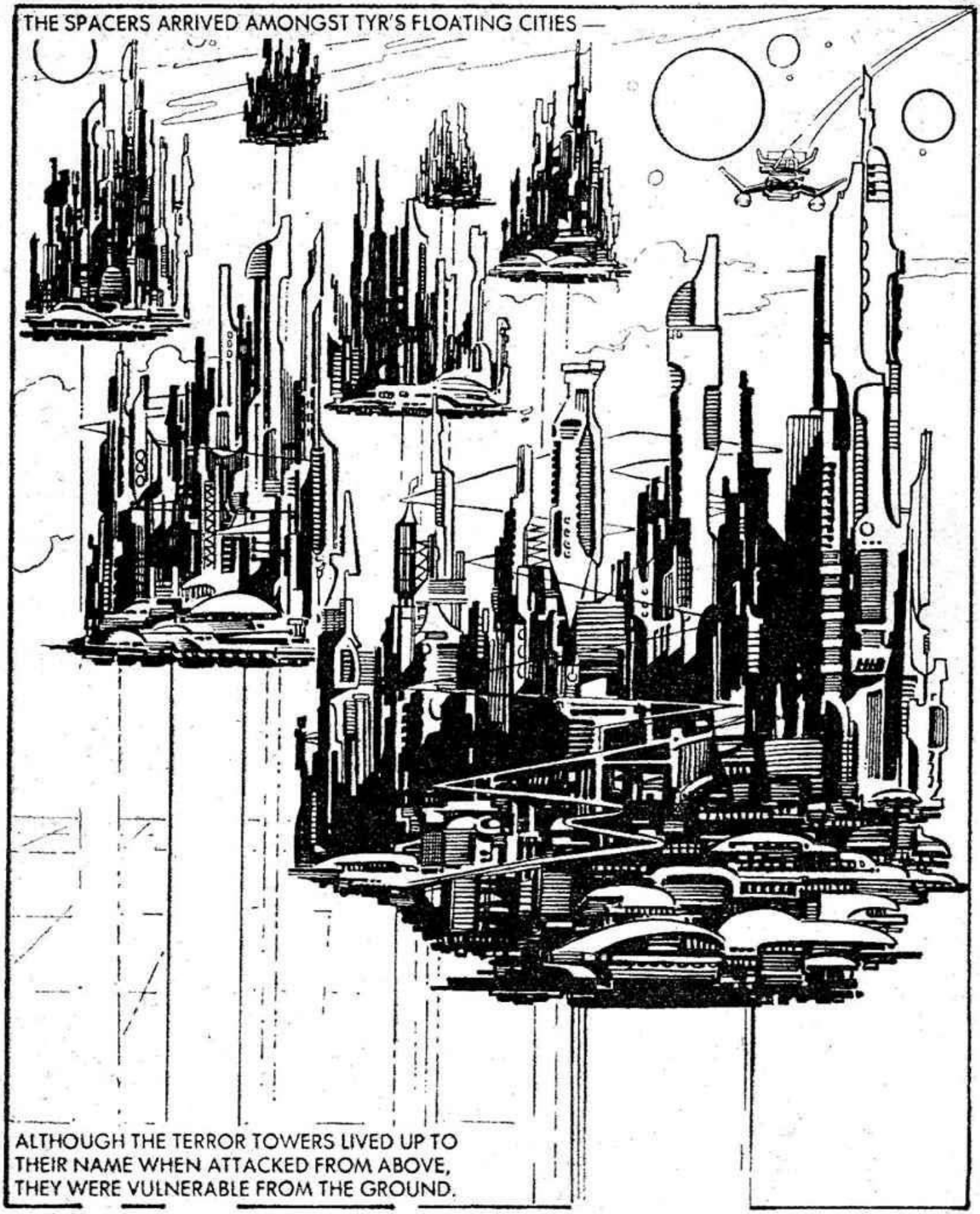

THE ALIENS REGROUPED AND FIRED A SALVO OF MISSILES AT THE SPACERS.


DAVID BLASTED THE MISSILES WITH THE PHOTON CANNON.

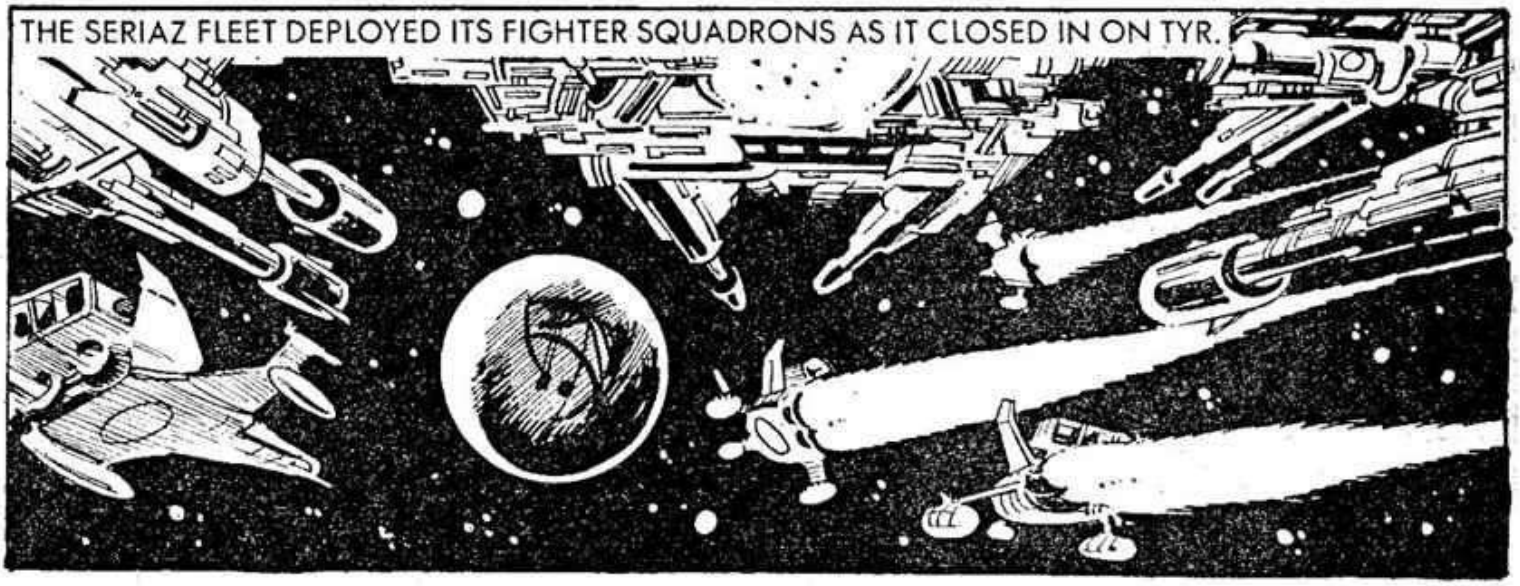

WHO'LL CRACK FIRST?

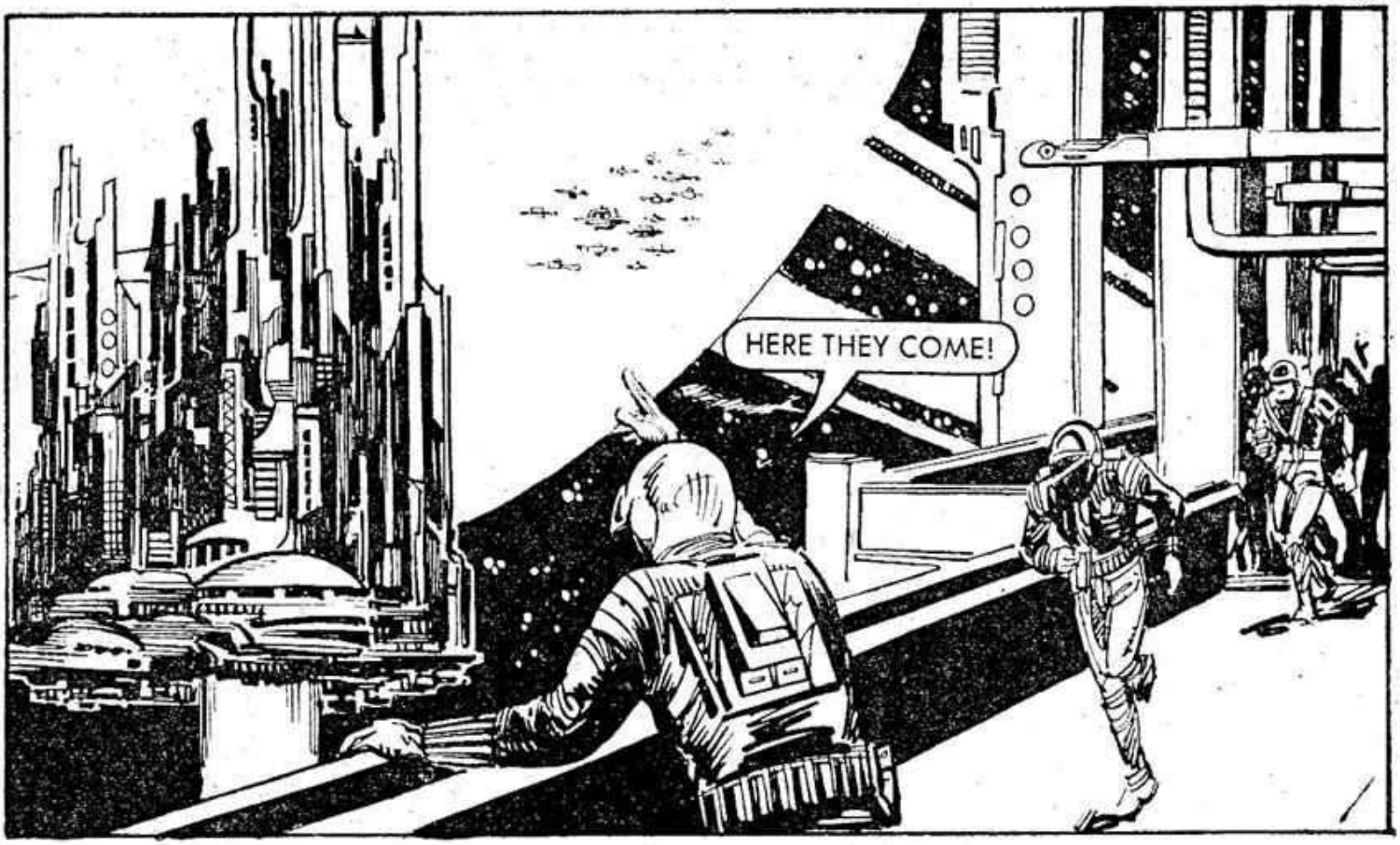
THE SERIAZ FIGHTERS PULLED AWAY FROM GARETH'S SUICIDE DIVE —
THIS DOGFIGHT HAS BROUGHT US WITHIN RANGE OF OUR PATROLS. THEY'RE ANSWERING OUR DISTRESS SIGNAL.

AS A PATROL ANSWERED THE SPACERS' DISTRESS CALL, THE PURSUING ALIEN FIGHTERS RETREATED.
I'VE ASKED FOR REINFORCEMENTS TO JOIN US ON TYR. THE PATROL IS GOING TO ESCORT US THERE.
TELL FEDERATION COMMAND WHERE WE FOUND THE ALIEN FLEET. NOT THAT IT'LL HELP — THEY WOULD HAVE STARTED FOR TYR AS SOON AS THEY KNEW WE'D GOT AWAY.


THE SPACERS ARRIVED AMONGST TYR'S FLOATING CITIES —
ALTHOUGH THE TERROR TOWERS LIVED UP TO THEIR NAME WHEN ATTACKED FROM ABOVE, THEY WERE VULNERABLE FROM THE GROUND.

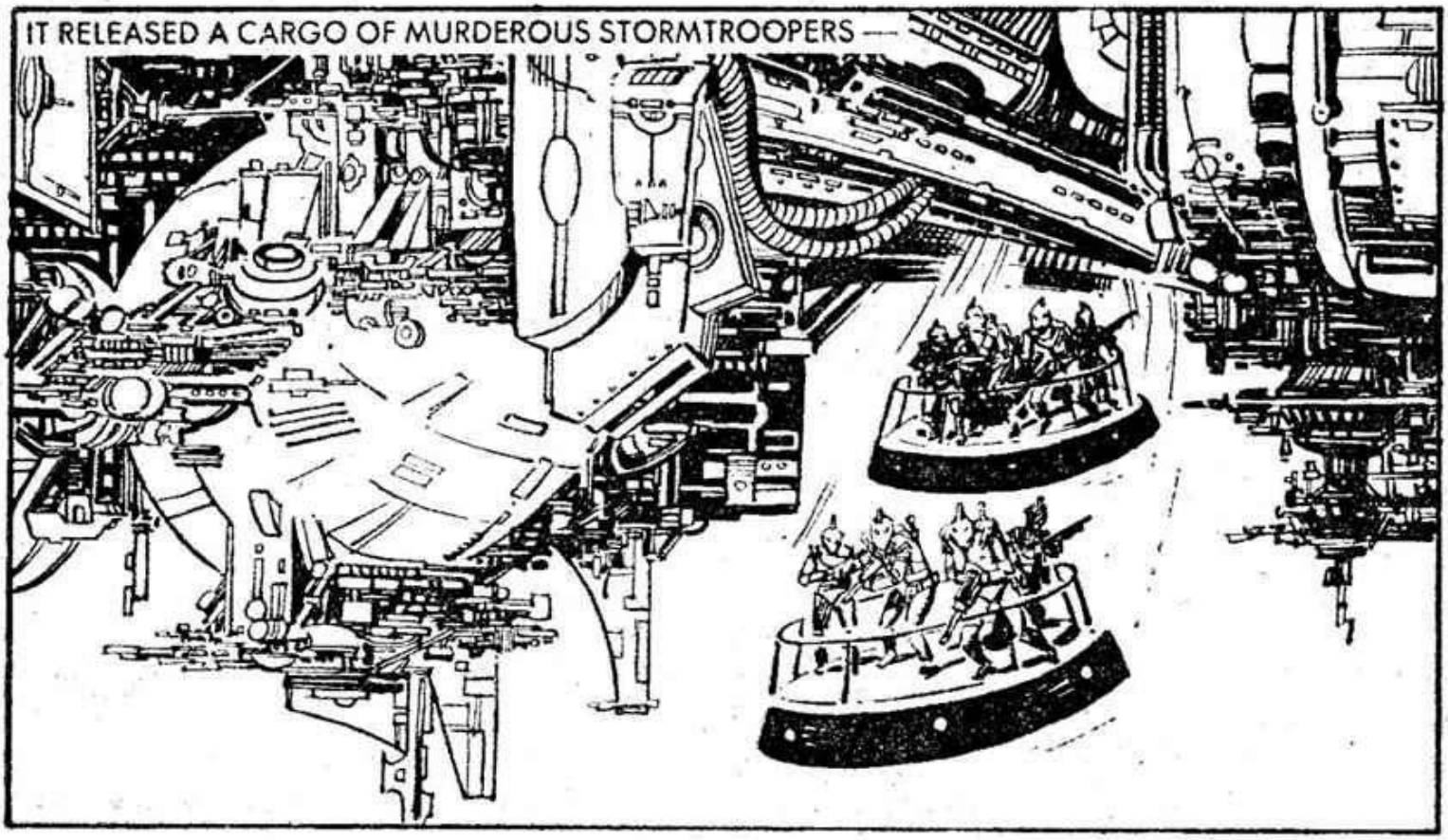
THE SPACERS REPORTED THE SITUATION TO THE PRESIDENT OF TYR AND HIS GENERAL STAFF.
WE WILL ALLOW THE ALIENS TO ADVANCE ON TYR, IN ORDER TO BE SURE OF DESTROYING THEM IN ONE ENGAGEMENT. THESE CITIES AREN'T KNOWN AS TERROR TOWERS FOR NOTHING.
THAT BEAM IS THE ONLY THING HOLDING THE WHOLE CITY UP?
ONE GIANT LASER FOR EACH CITY, POWERED BY UNDERGROUND REACTORS. LASER LIGHT ACTIVATES THE ANTI-GRAVITY PROPERTIES IN THE ASTRIUM FROM WHICH THE CITIES ARE BUILT.

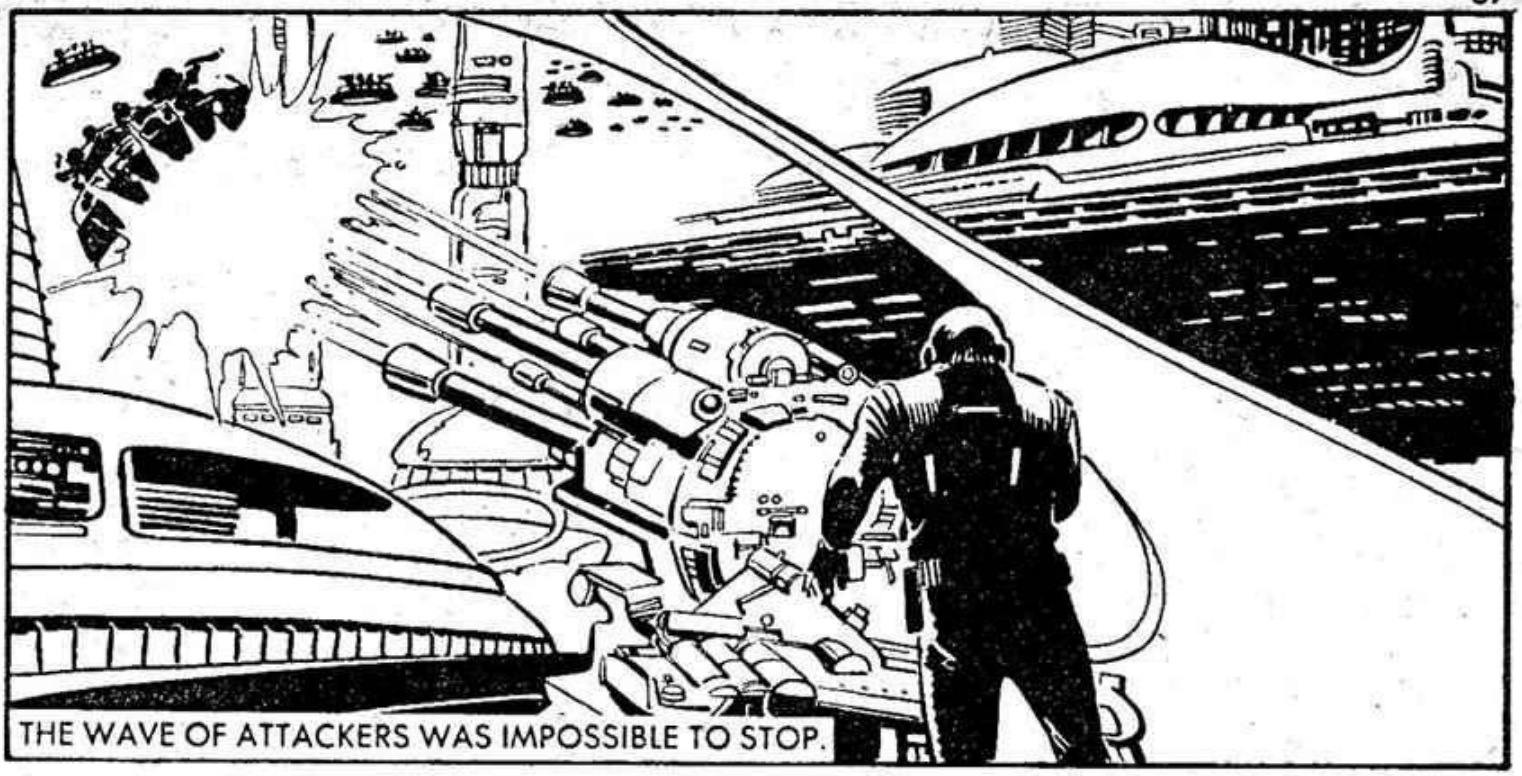

THE SERIAZ FLEET DEPLOYED ITS FIGHTER SQUADRONS AS IT CLOSED IN ON TYR.

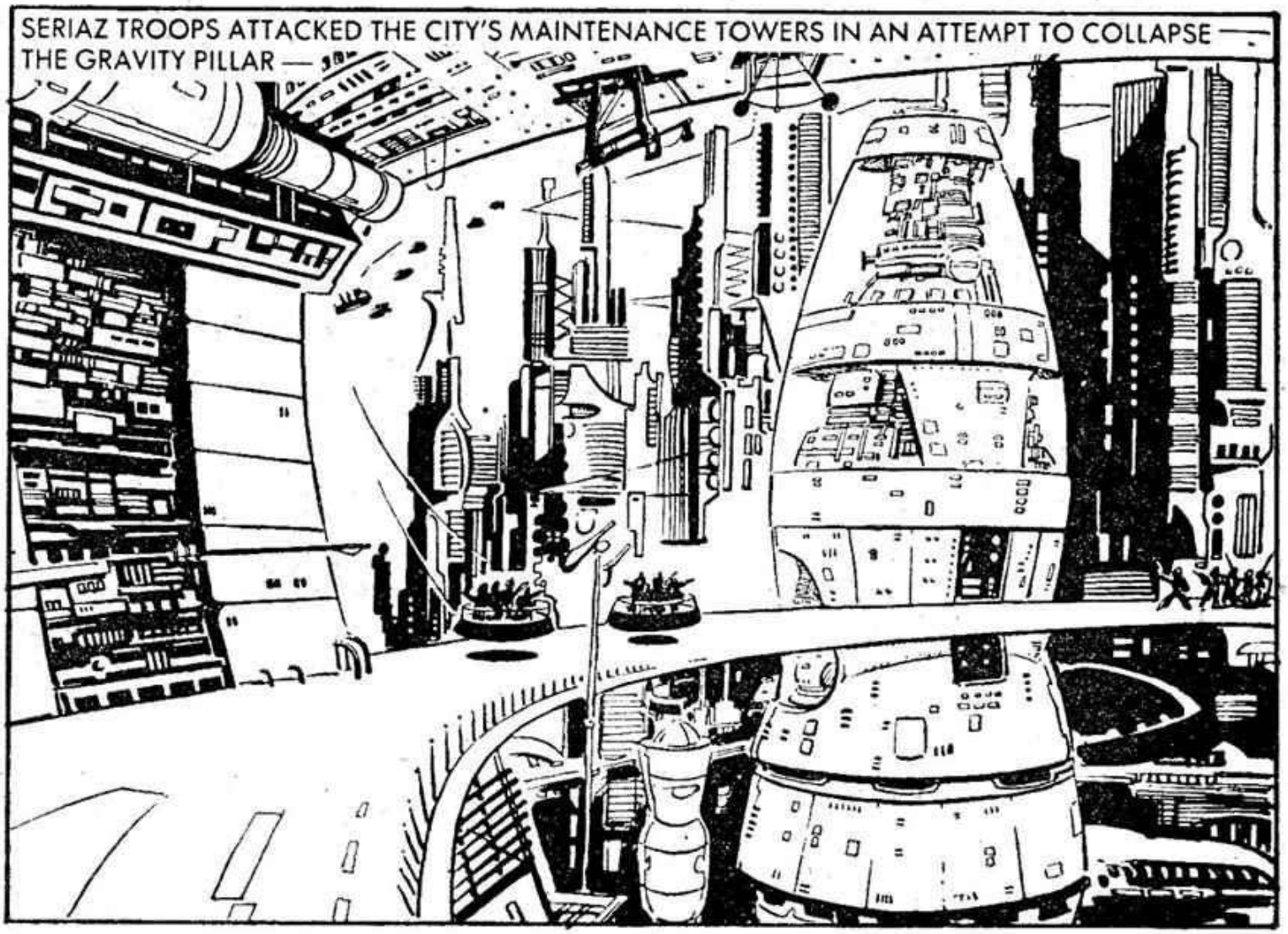

HERE THEY COME!

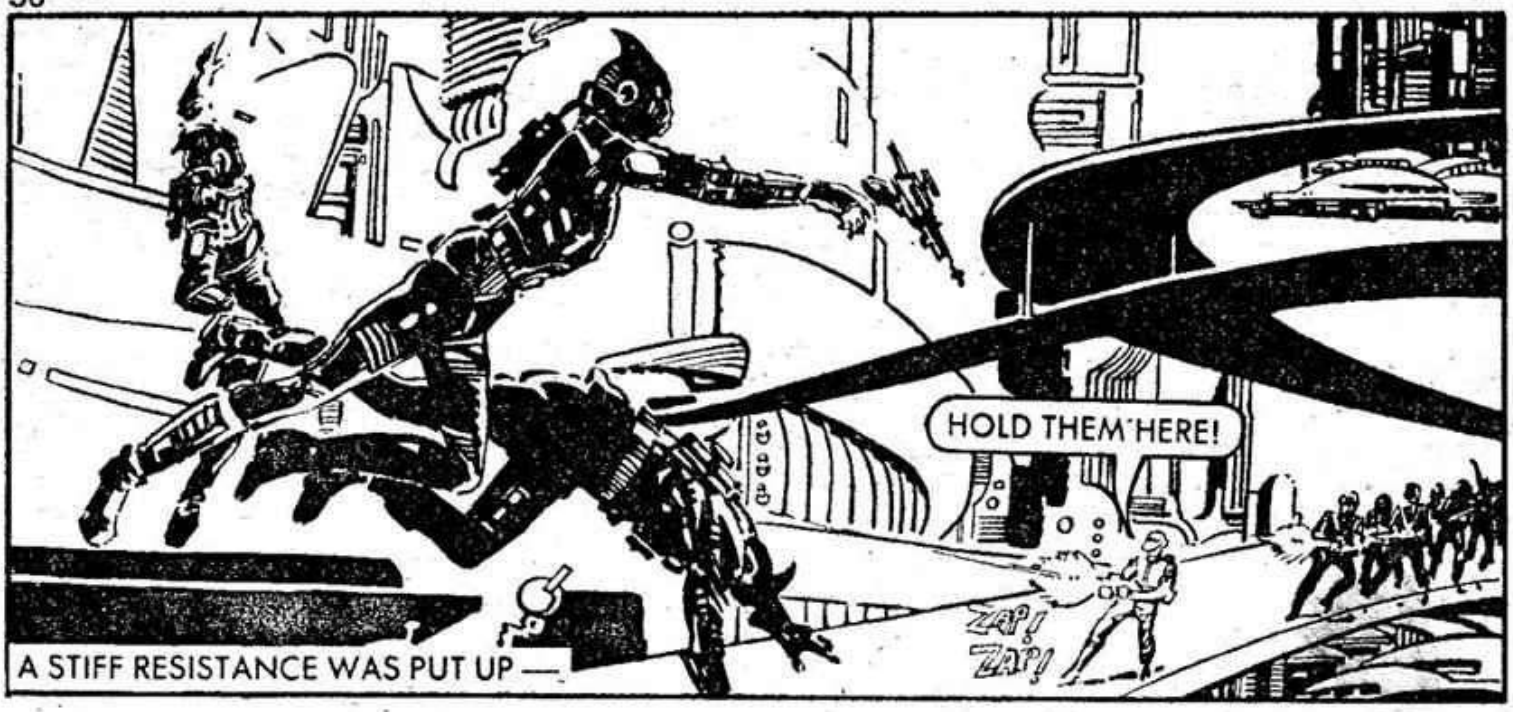
TYR'S FIGHTER COMMAND ROARED OUT TO MEET THE ENEMY —
GET THAT TROOPSHIP!

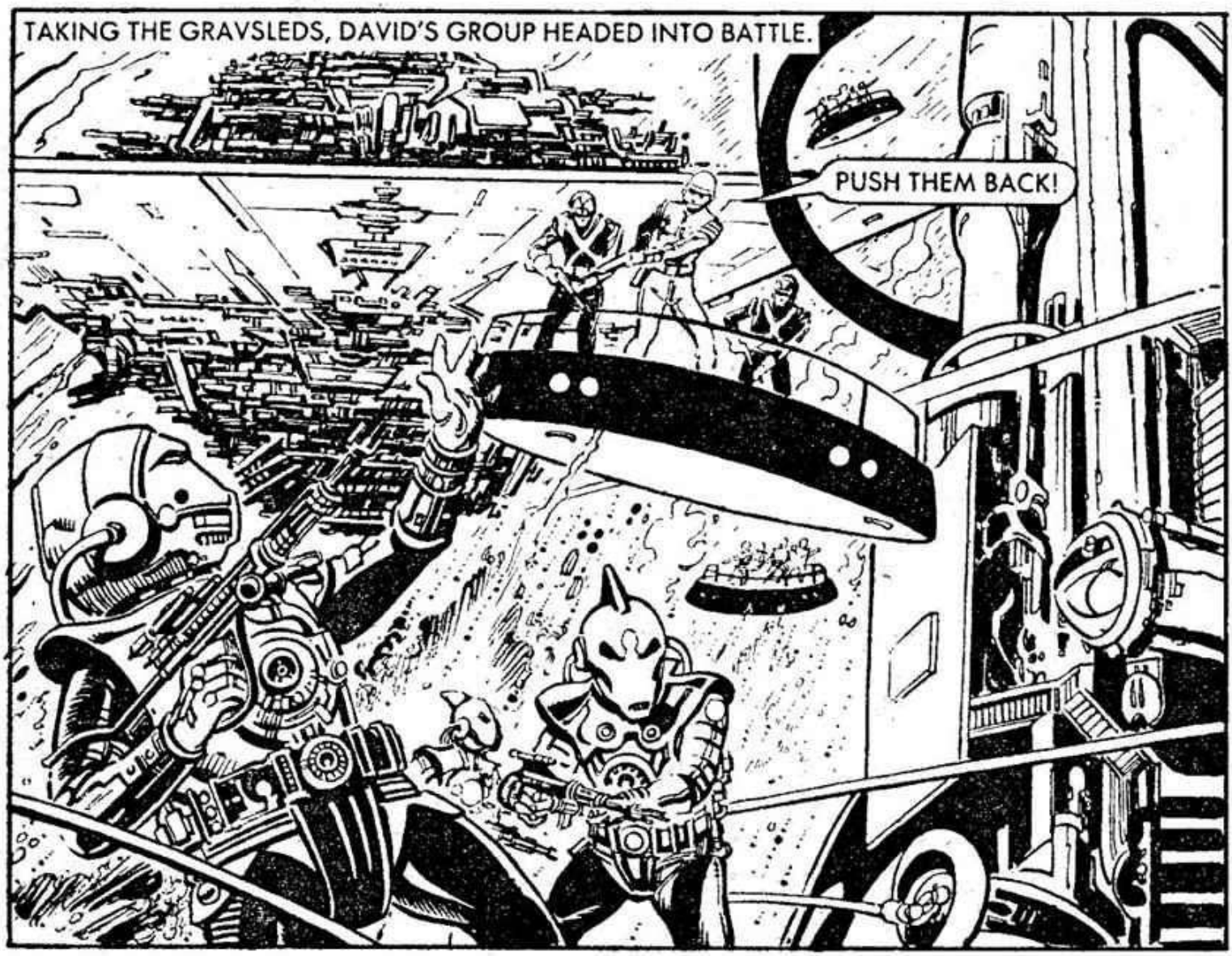
BUT THE TROOPSHIP WAS ABLE TO MANOEUVRE TOWARDS THE CAPITAL CITY.


IT RELEASED A CARGO OF MURDEROUS STORMTROOPERS —


THE WAVE OF ATTACKERS WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO STOP.

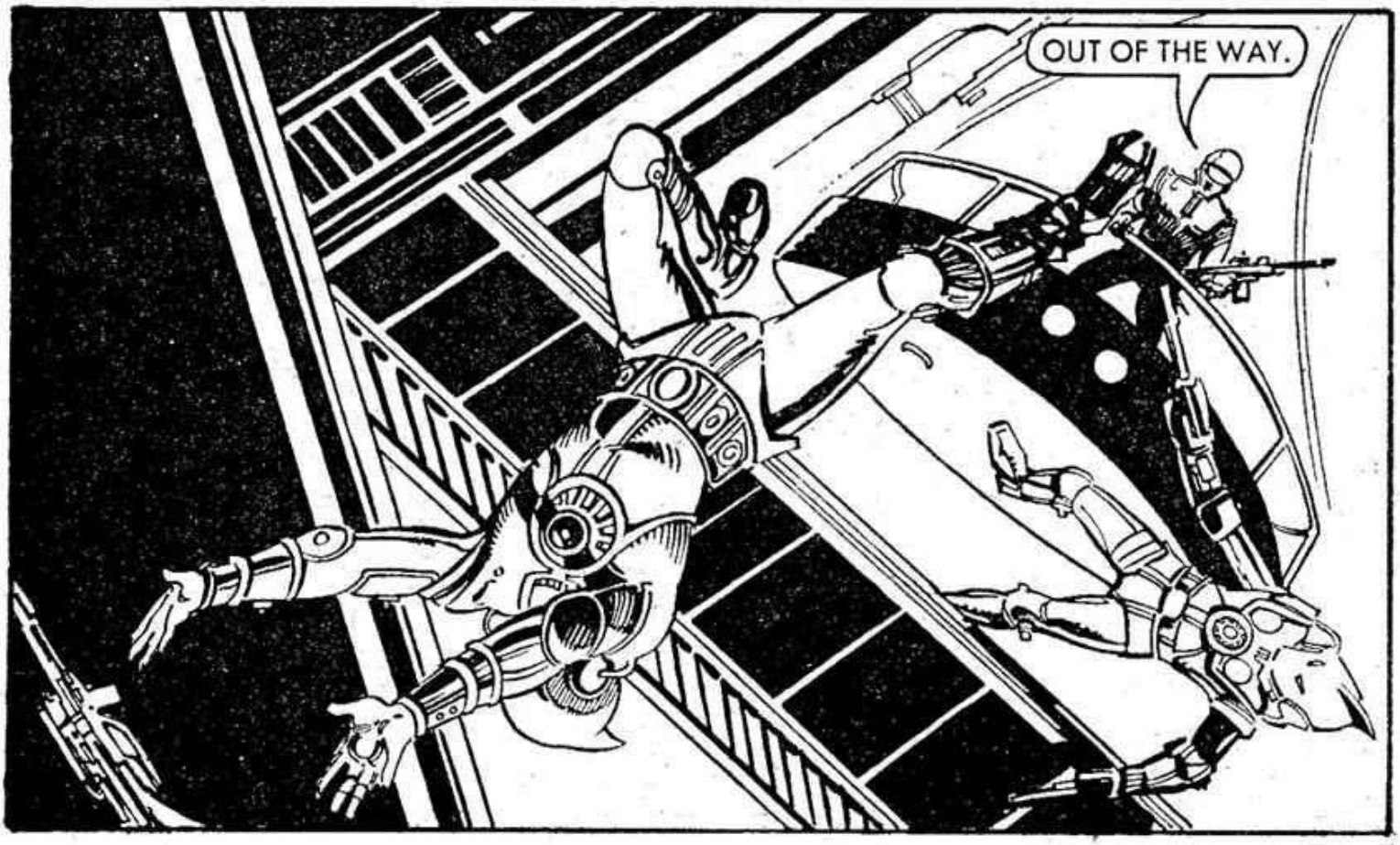

SERIAZ TROOPS ATTACKED THE CITY'S MAINTENANCE TOWERS IN AN ATTEMPT TO COLLAPSE THE GRAVITY PILLAR —

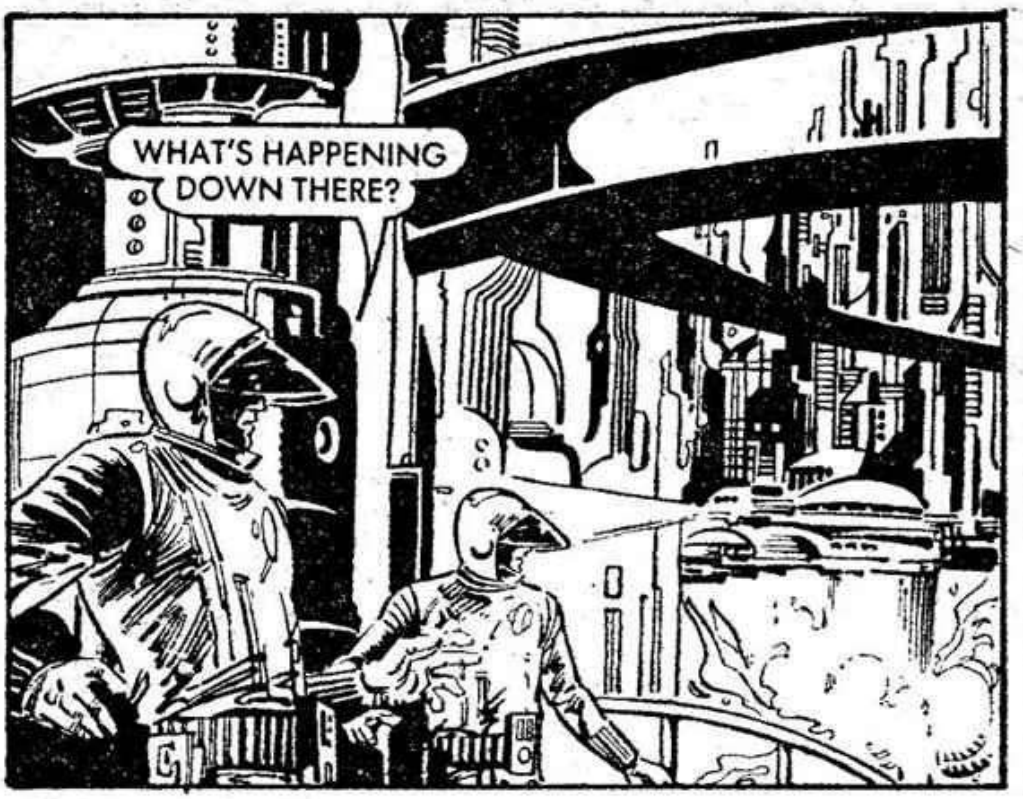

HOLD THEM HERE!
ZAP! ZAP!
A STIFF RESISTANCE WAS PUT UP —

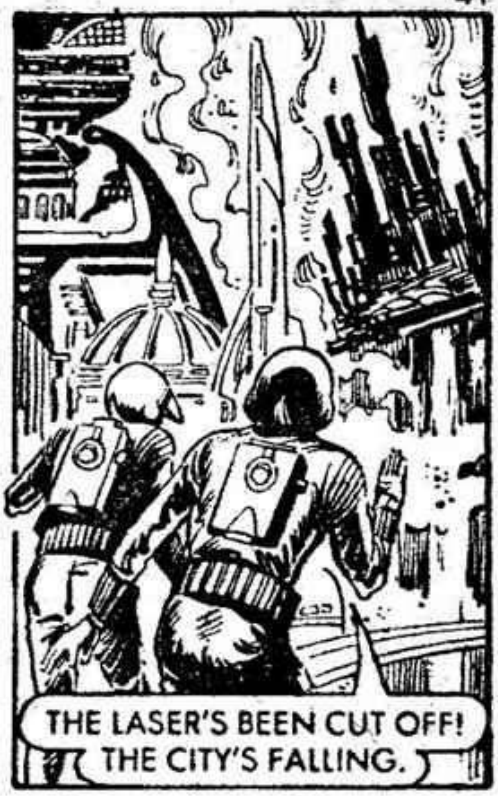

TAKING THE GRAVSLEDS, DAVID'S GROUP HEADED INTO BATTLE.
PUSH THEM BACK!

THE CONFLICT WAS FIERCE AND MANY CASUALTIES WERE SUSTAINED.

GARETH'S IN TROUBLE.

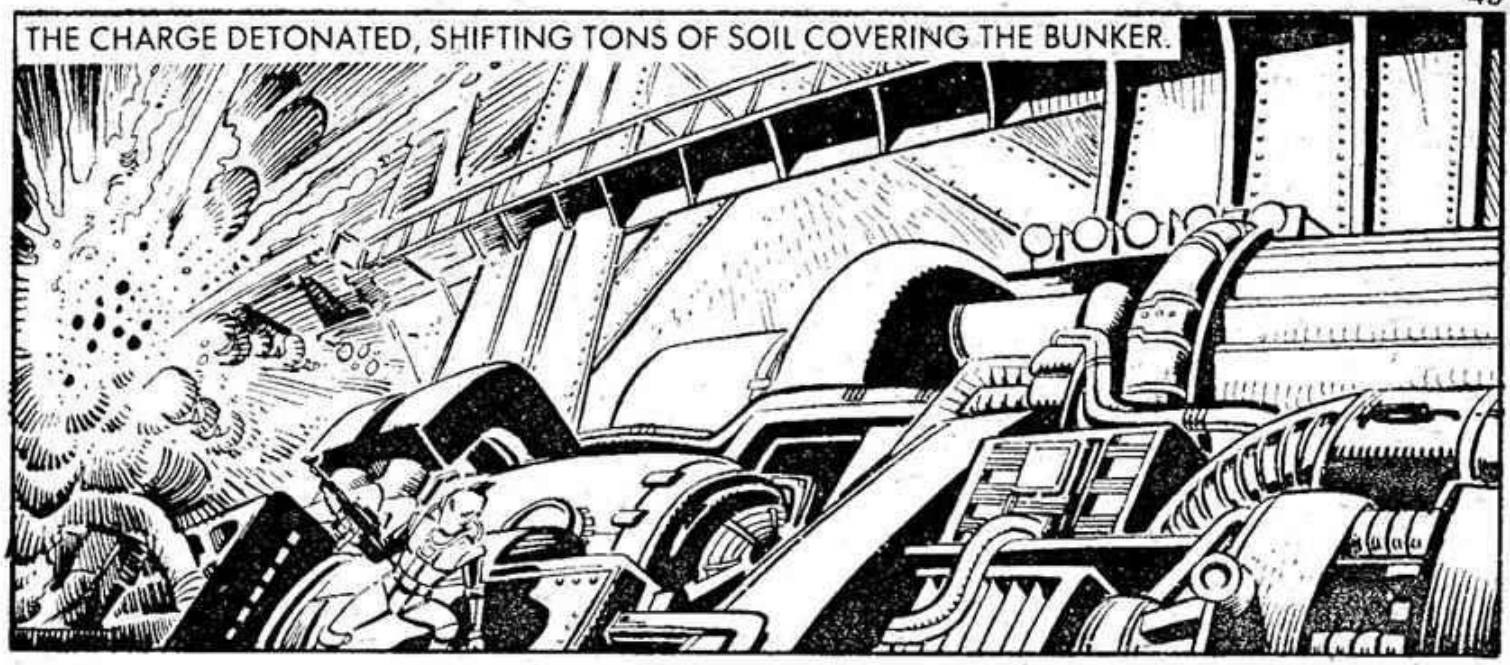

OUT OF THE WAY.

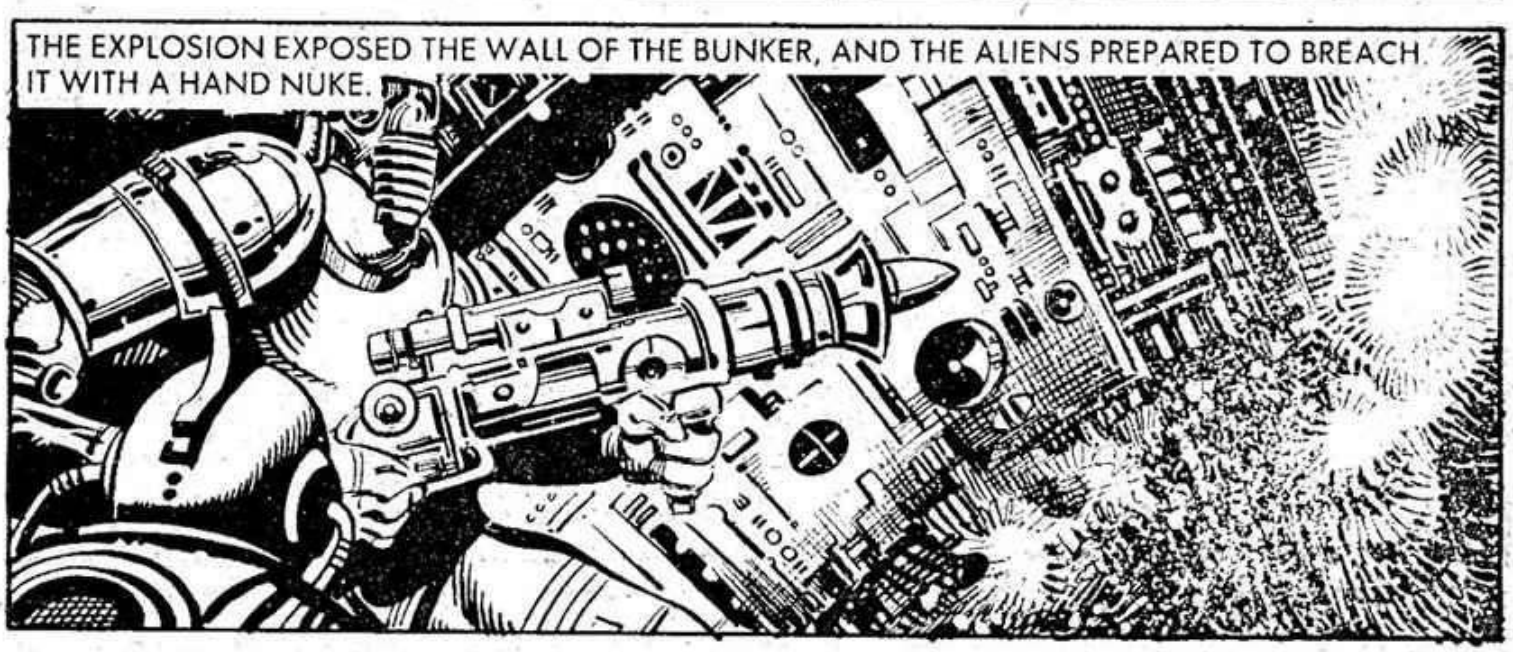

WHAT'S HAPPENING DOWN THERE?

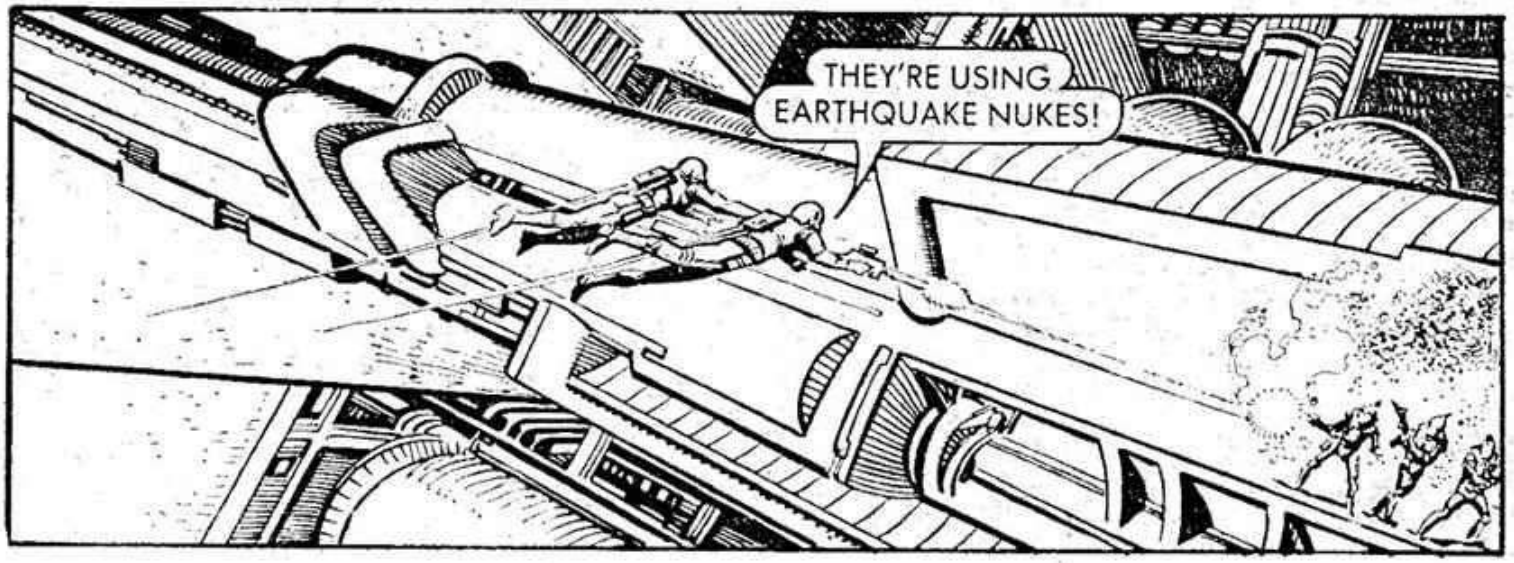

THE LASER'S BEEN CUT OFF! THE CITY'S FALLING.

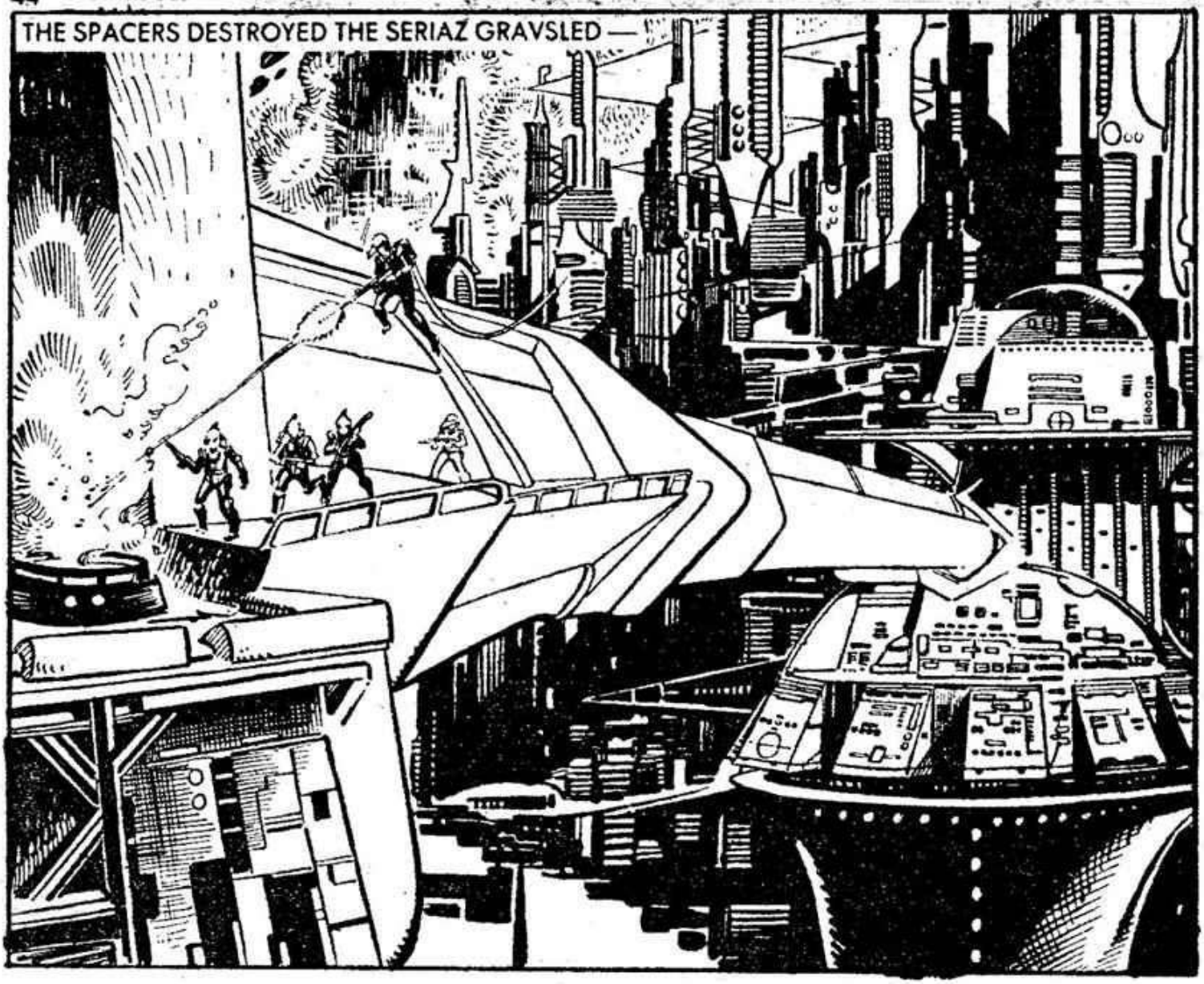
THE SURFACE OF TYR WAS STERILE AND UNSUITABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT. AS THE ASTRIUM WAS SO VALUABLE, A SERIES OF CITIES HAD BEEN BUILT TO UTILISE THE PROPERTIES OF THE ASTRIUM.
THEY MUST HAVE LANDED SABOTAGE TEAMS TO TOPPLE THE CITIES, AND CRUSH RESISTANCE.

THE SERIAZ SABOTAGE TEAMS WERE PLANTING EXPLOSIVES BESIDE REINFORCED REACTOR BUNKERS FROM WHICH A CITY-SUPPORTING LASER PROJECTED.


THE CHARGE DETONATED, SHIFTING TONS OF SOIL COVERING THE BUNKER.


THE EXPLOSION EXPOSED THE WALL OF THE BUNKER, AND THE ALIENS PREPARED TO BREACH IT WITH A HAND NUKE.

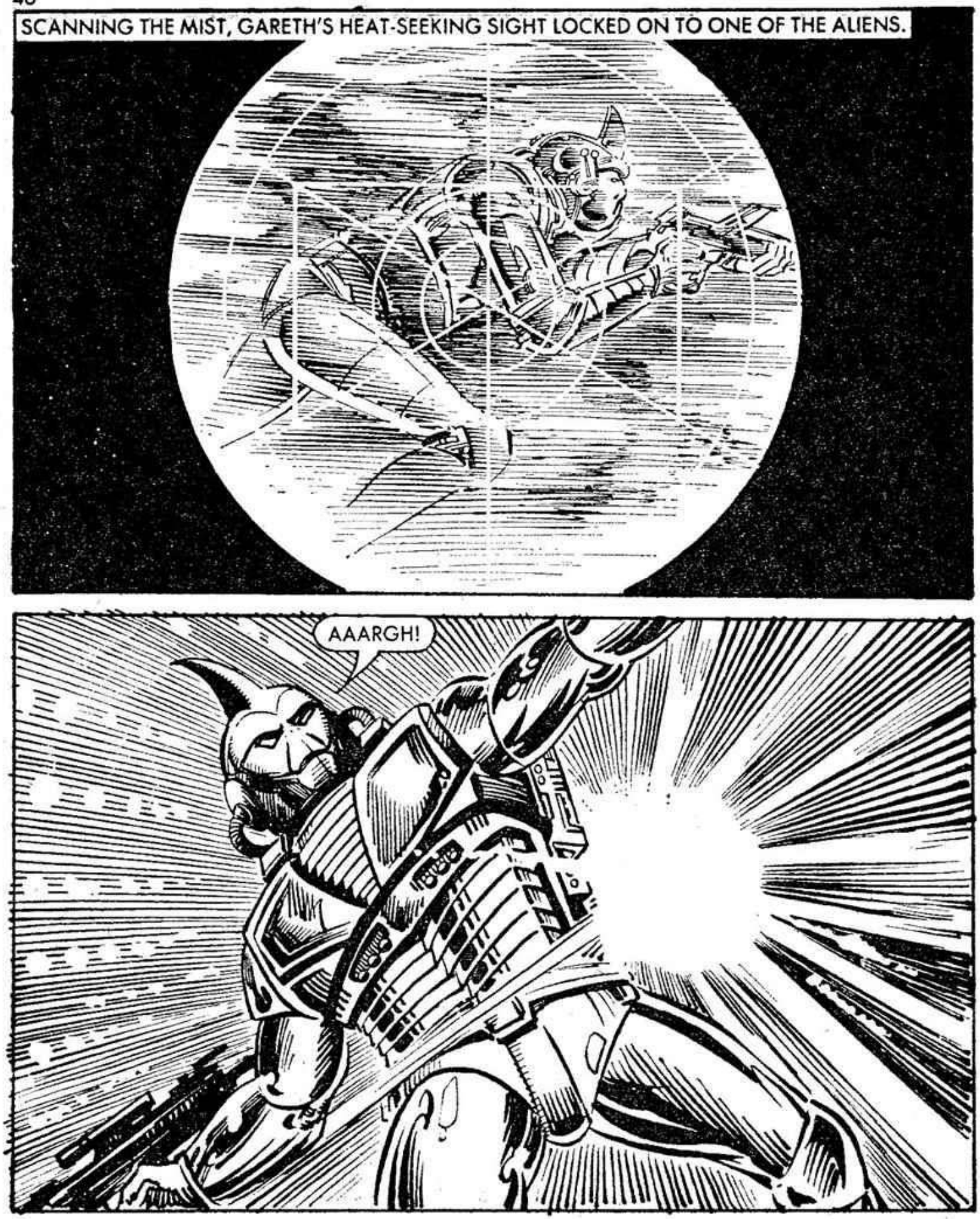

THEY'RE USING EARTHQUAKE NUKES!

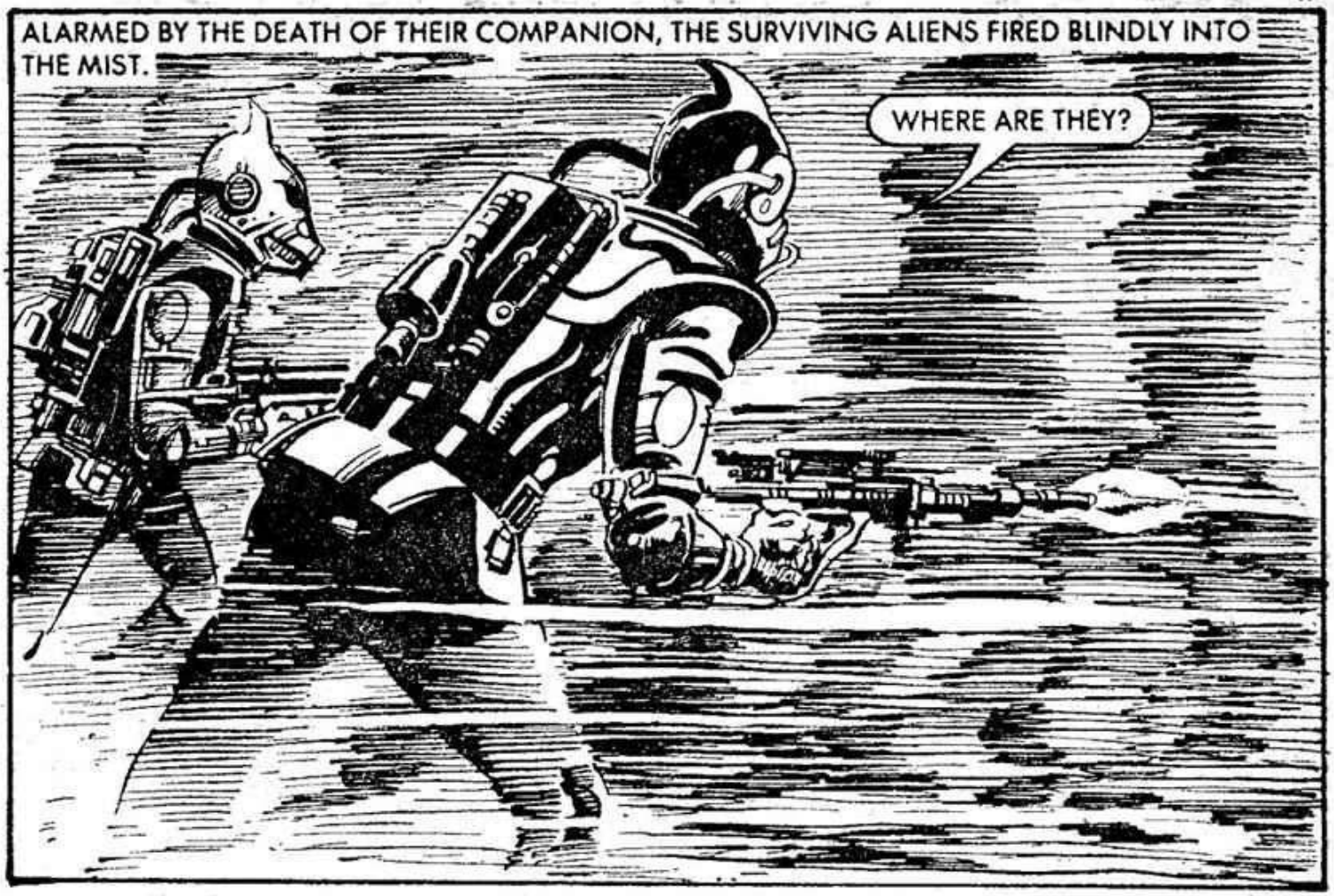

THE SPACERS DESTROYED THE SERIAZ GRAVSLED —

DAVID AND GARETH LANDED ONLY TO BE ATTACKED FROM BEHIND.

NERVE GAS! USE RESPIRATORS!
THE CAPSULE RELEASED A LETHAL CHLORINE BASED GAS THAT WAS FATAL.

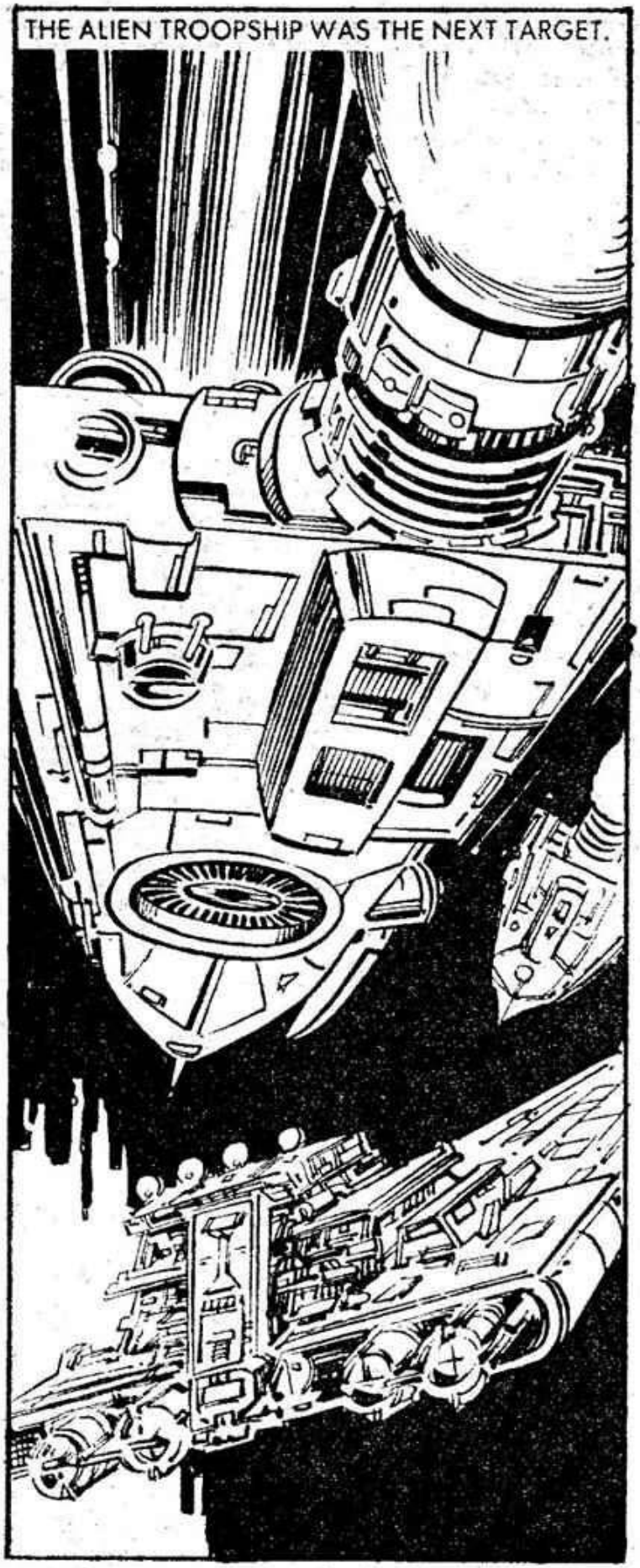
UNABLE TO MAKE ANY HEADWAY IN THE MIST, THE SPACERS FITTED BIOSCAN SIGHTS.


SCANNING THE MIST, GARETH'S HEAT-SEEKING SIGHT LOCKED ON TO ONE OF THE ALIENS.
AAARGH!


ALARMED BY THE DEATH OF THEIR COMPANION, THE SURVIVING ALIENS FIRED BLINDLY INTO THE MIST.
WHERE ARE THEY?

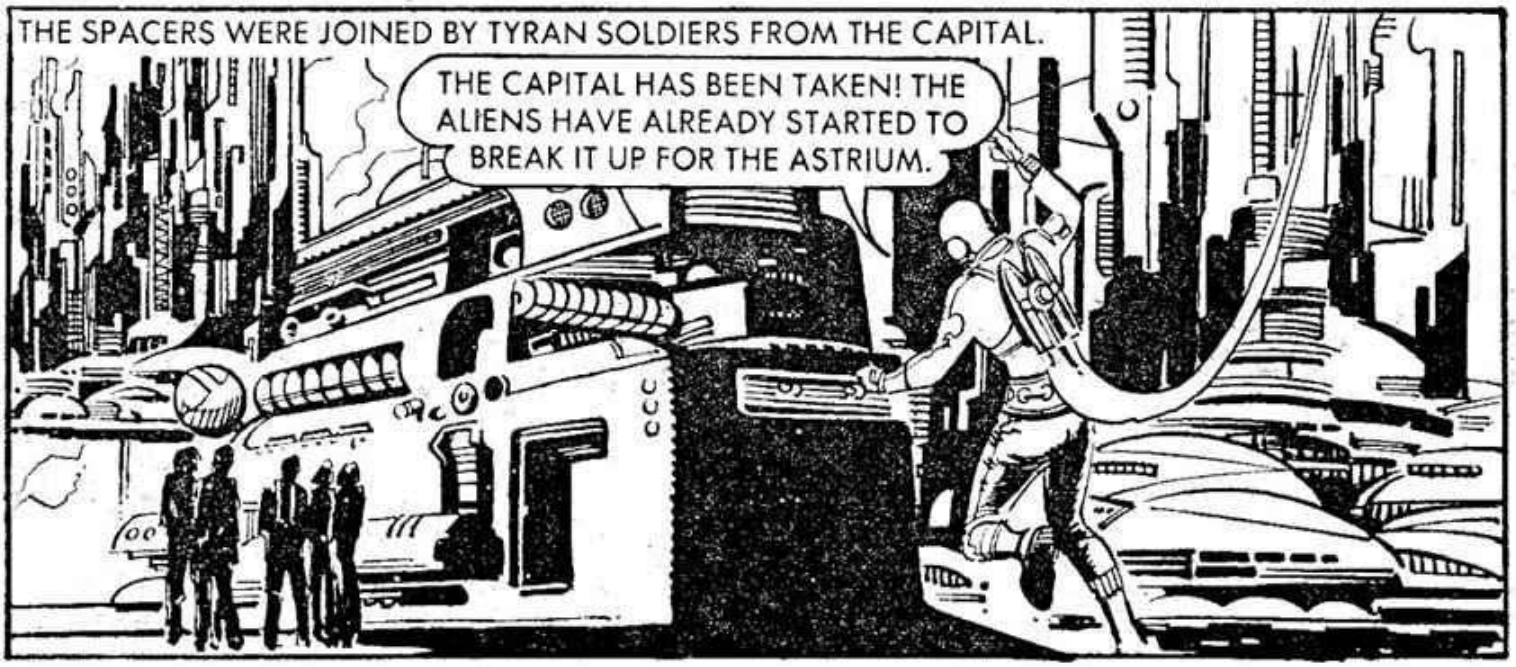
WE HAVE NOT HIT ANYTHING!

HIGH ABOVE, A PAIR OF SPACER BATTLESHIPS FINALLY PENETRATED THE ALIEN SQUADRONS, AND OPENED FIRE ON A CRUISER AS IT LAUNCHED FIGHTERS.
THE MISSILES CLAIMED ALL THREE ENEMY SHIPS.


THE ALIEN TROOPSHIP WAS THE NEXT TARGET.

BUT THE TROOPSHIP'S HEAVY ARMAMENTS TOOK OUT THE SPACERS AS THEY MADE THEIR ATTACK RUN.

THEY MUST GET THE TROOPSHIP IF WE'RE TO WIN THE BATTLE.
THERE'S A GRAVSLED COMING TOWARDS US.


THE SPACERS WERE JOINED BY TYRAN SOLDIERS FROM THE CAPITAL.
THE CAPITAL HAS BEEN TAKEN! THE ALIENS HAVE ALREADY STARTED TO BREAK IT UP FOR THE ASTRIUM.

SERIAZ CRAFT WERE TEARING THE CITY TO BITS.

IN HIS UNDERGROUND HEADQUARTERS, THE PRESIDENT WATCHED THE LOSS OF HIS CAPITAL CITY.
TURN OFF THE CAPITAL'S SUPPORTING LASER.
AT LEAST WE'LL DESTROY A FEW OF THEM.

THE CITY'S FALLING.

THEY WOULD RATHER DESTROY THEIR OWN CITIES THAN LET THEM FALL INTO OUR HANDS. PRESS HOME THE ATTACK. TOPPLE EVERY CITY, DESTROY ALL THEIR DEFENCES — WE'LL COLLECT THE ASTRIUM AFTER THE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN ELIMINATED.

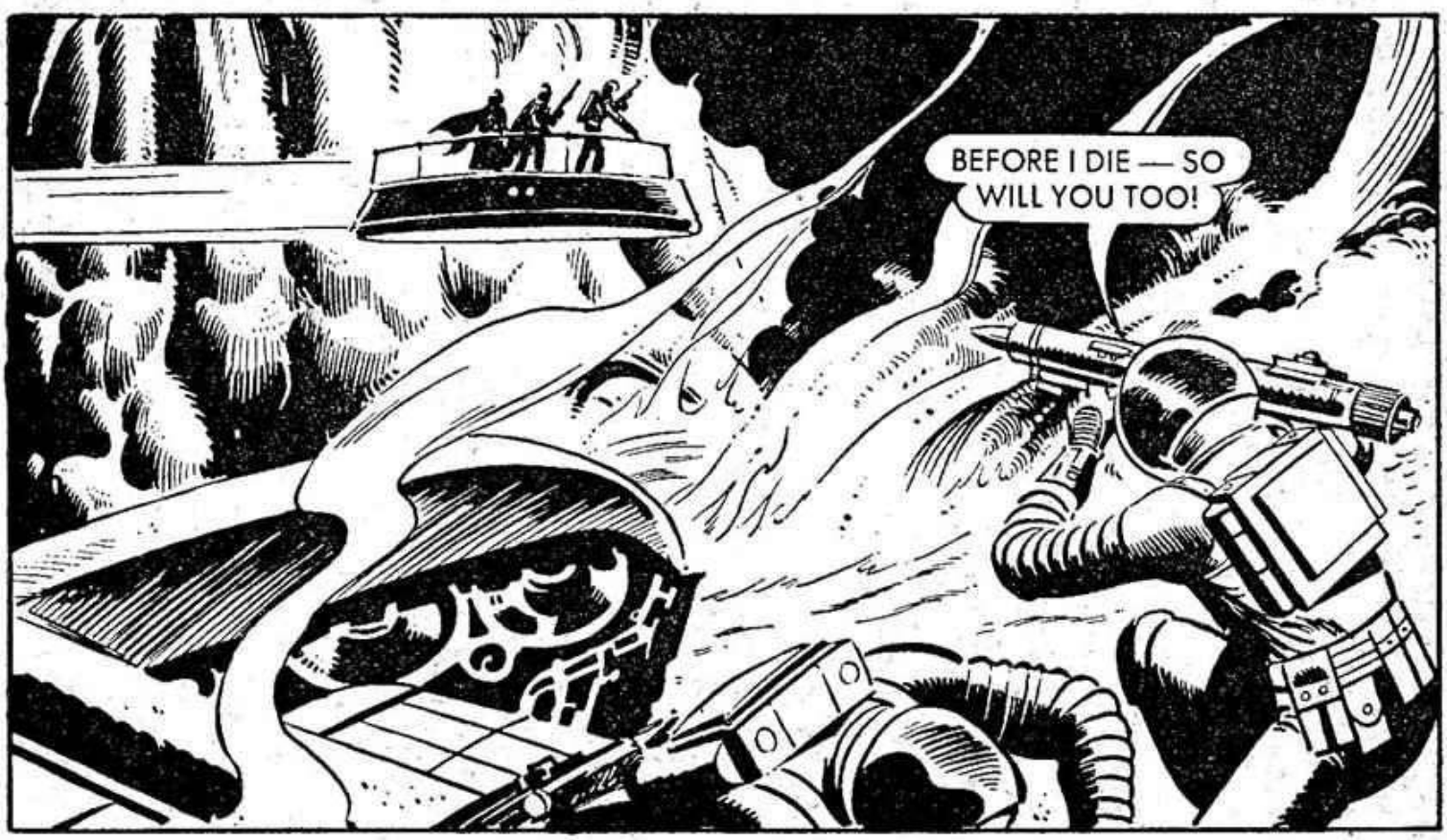
THE CITY EXPLODED, TAKING THOUSANDS OF ENEMY TROOPS, AND THE CRUISER WITH IT.

THE SPACERS SET OUT TO STOP THE RELENTLESS ATTACK —
THE SABOTEURS SHOULD HAVE A MOBILE SUPPLY POST SOMEWHERE ON THE GROUND. ASK ONE OF OUR SHIPS TO SCAN FOR IT.

A SCAN SHOWED MILITARY ACTIVITY IN A REMOTE DESERT HOLLOW, AND THEY WENT TO INVESTIGATE.
THAT MUST BE THE EXPLOSIVES VEHICLE.

GARETH FLEW A GRAVSLED TOWARDS THE ALIEN CAMP, WITH TYRAN SOLDIERS PROVIDING COVERING FIRE.
TIME TO GET OFF!
THE GRAVSLED FOLLOWED ITS PRE-SET COURSE —
TAKE COVER!

THE GRAVSLED SCORED A DIRECT HIT ON THE EXPLOSIVES, AND THE ENTIRE SUPPLY POST BLEW UP.

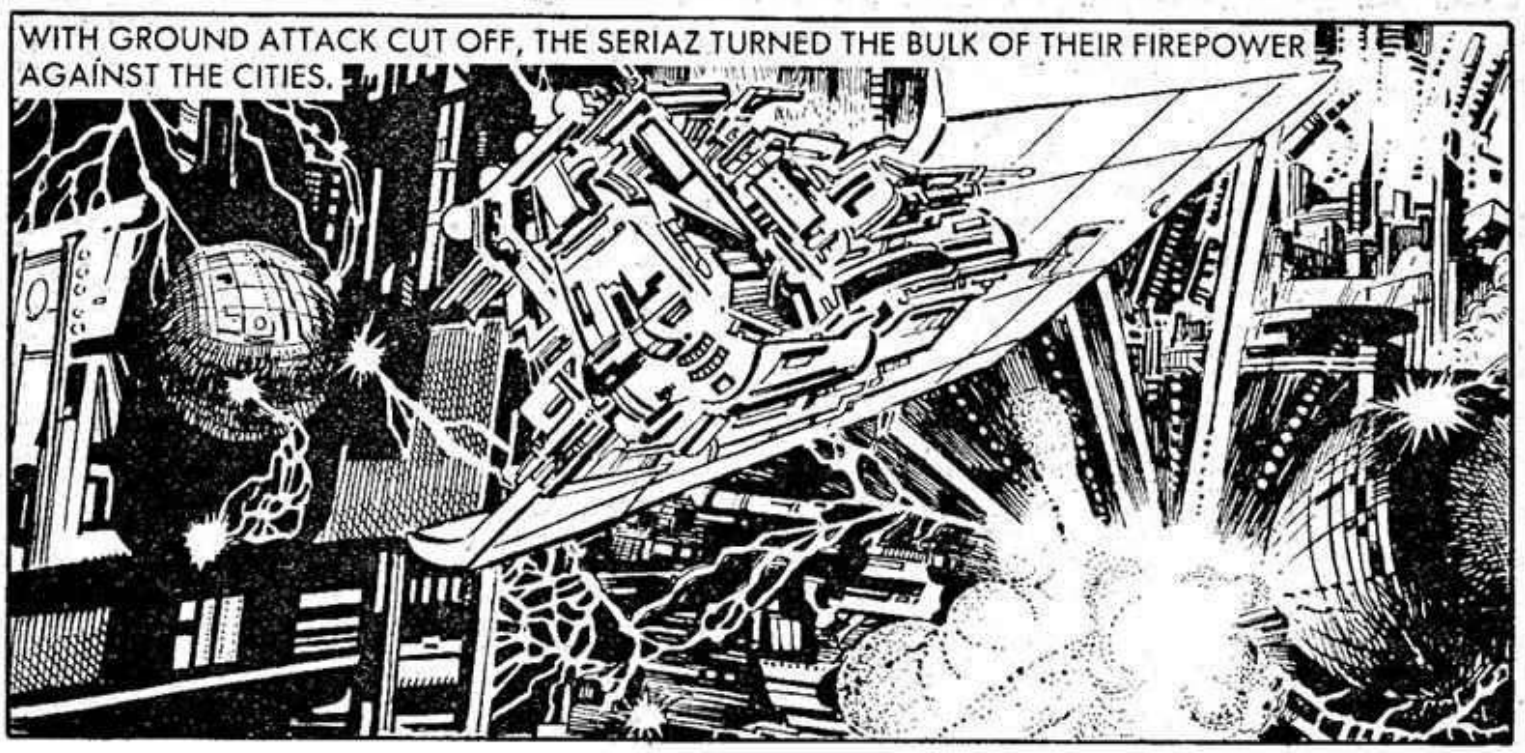

BEFORE I DIE — SO WILL YOU TOO!

LOOK OUT!

BUT THE WARNING WAS JUST TOO LATE, DAVID WAS THROWN OUT.

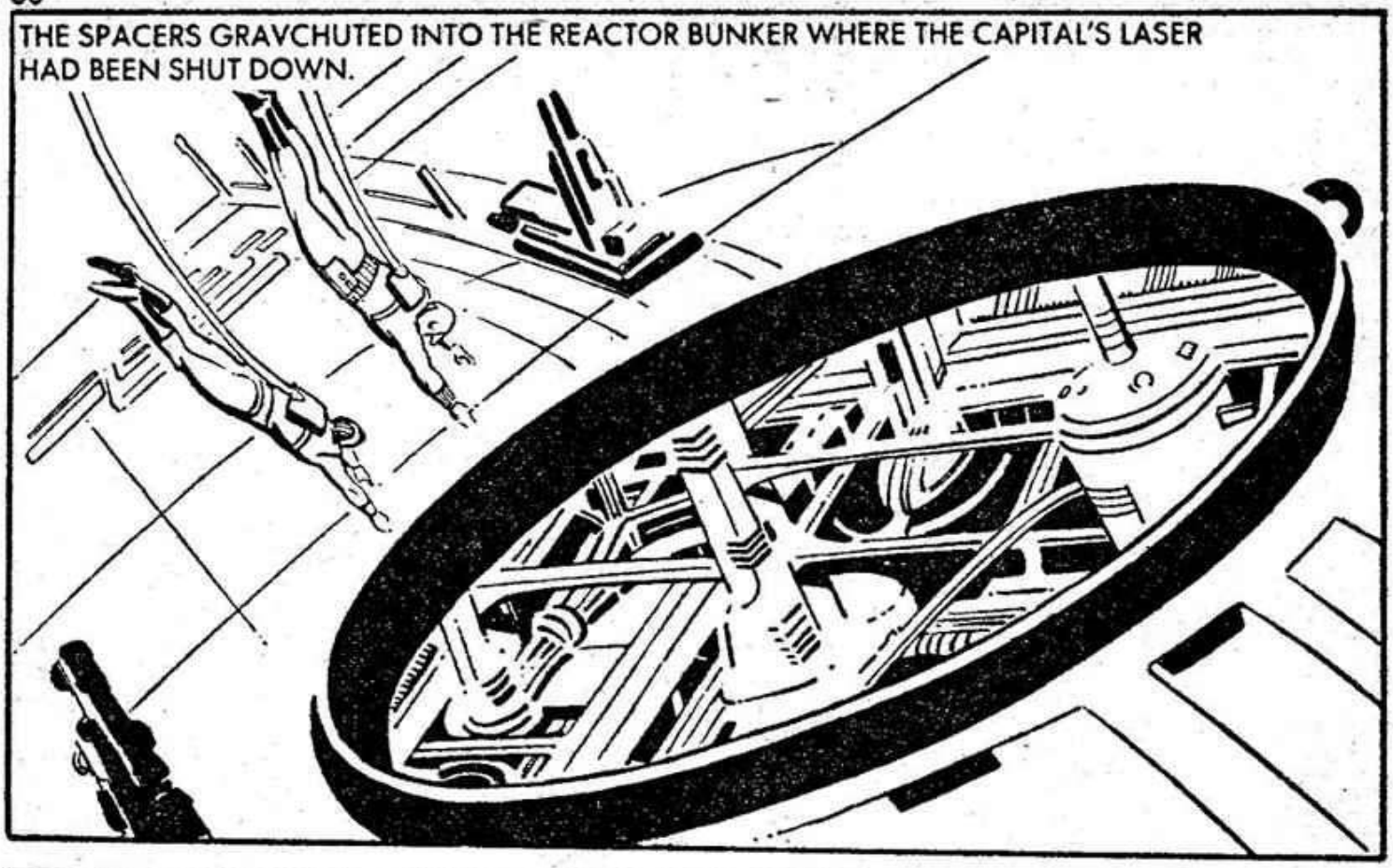
BRING A MEDPACK — DAVID'S IN HERE SOMEWHERE.

DAVID WAS FOUND — BADLY INJURED —
THAT'S ALL I CAN DO — GET HIM ON A HOVSTRETCH AND BACK TO THE CITY.

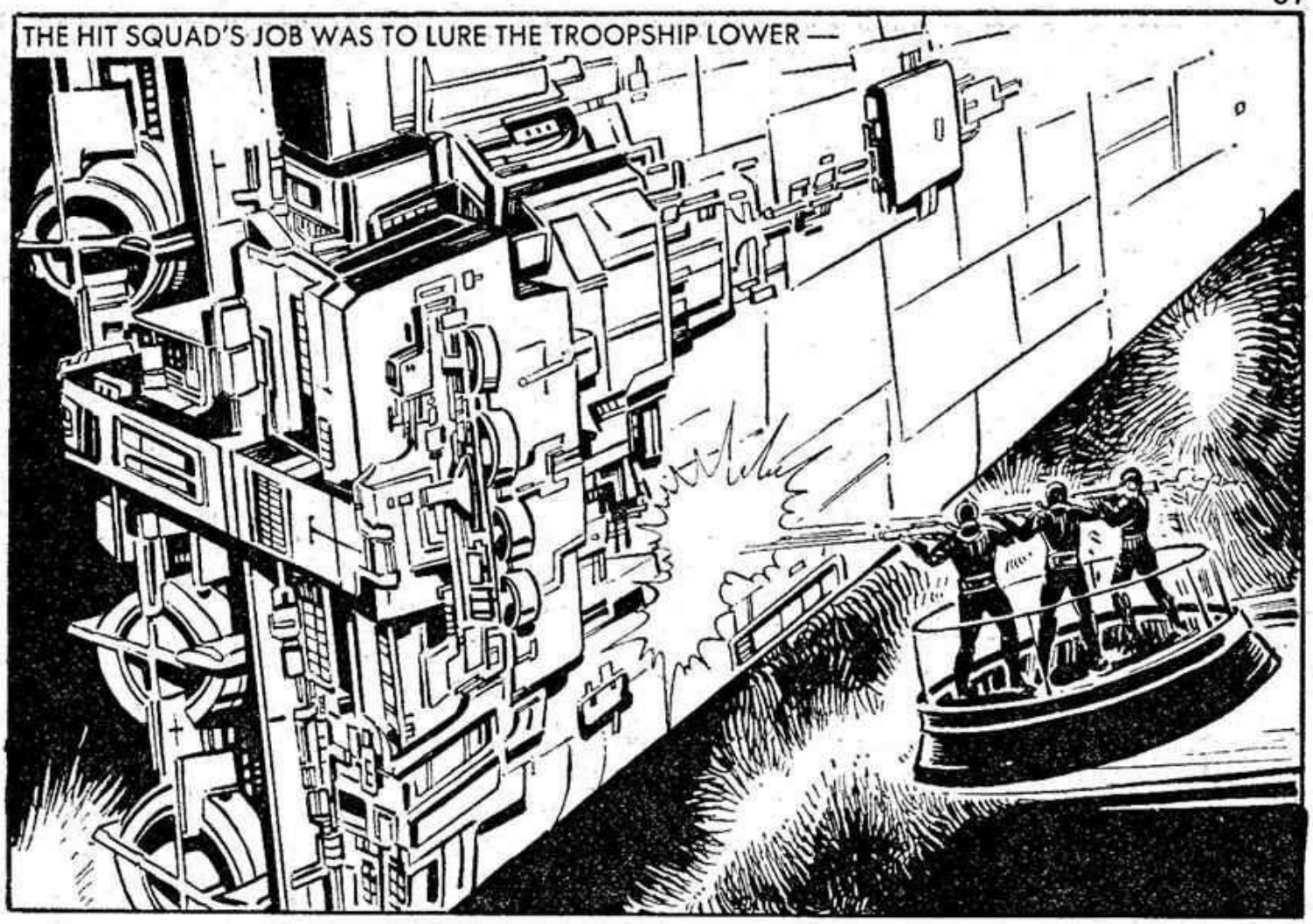

WITH GROUND ATTACK CUT OFF, THE SERIAZ TURNED THE BULK OF THEIR FIREPOWER AGAINST THE CITIES.

THE TROOPSHIP'S JUST BLASTING THE CITIES! AND OUR FLEET CAN'T GET AT IT THROUGH THE ALIEN FIGHTER SCREEN . . . WAIT A MINUTE . . . CORPORAL . . .COME WITH ME.

I ONLY HOPE MY IDEA WORKS — THAT TROOPSHIP IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS.

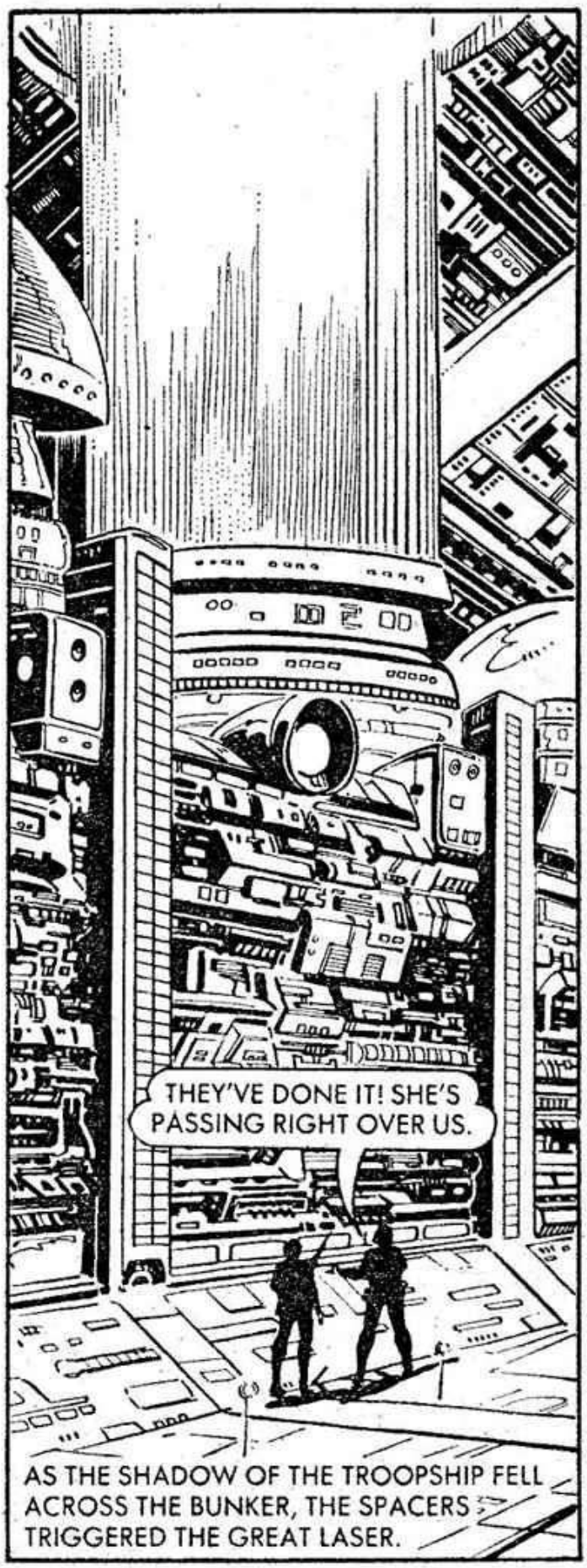

THE SPACERS GRAVCHUTED INTO THE REACTOR BUNKER WHERE THE CAPITAL'S LASER HAD BEEN SHUT DOWN.

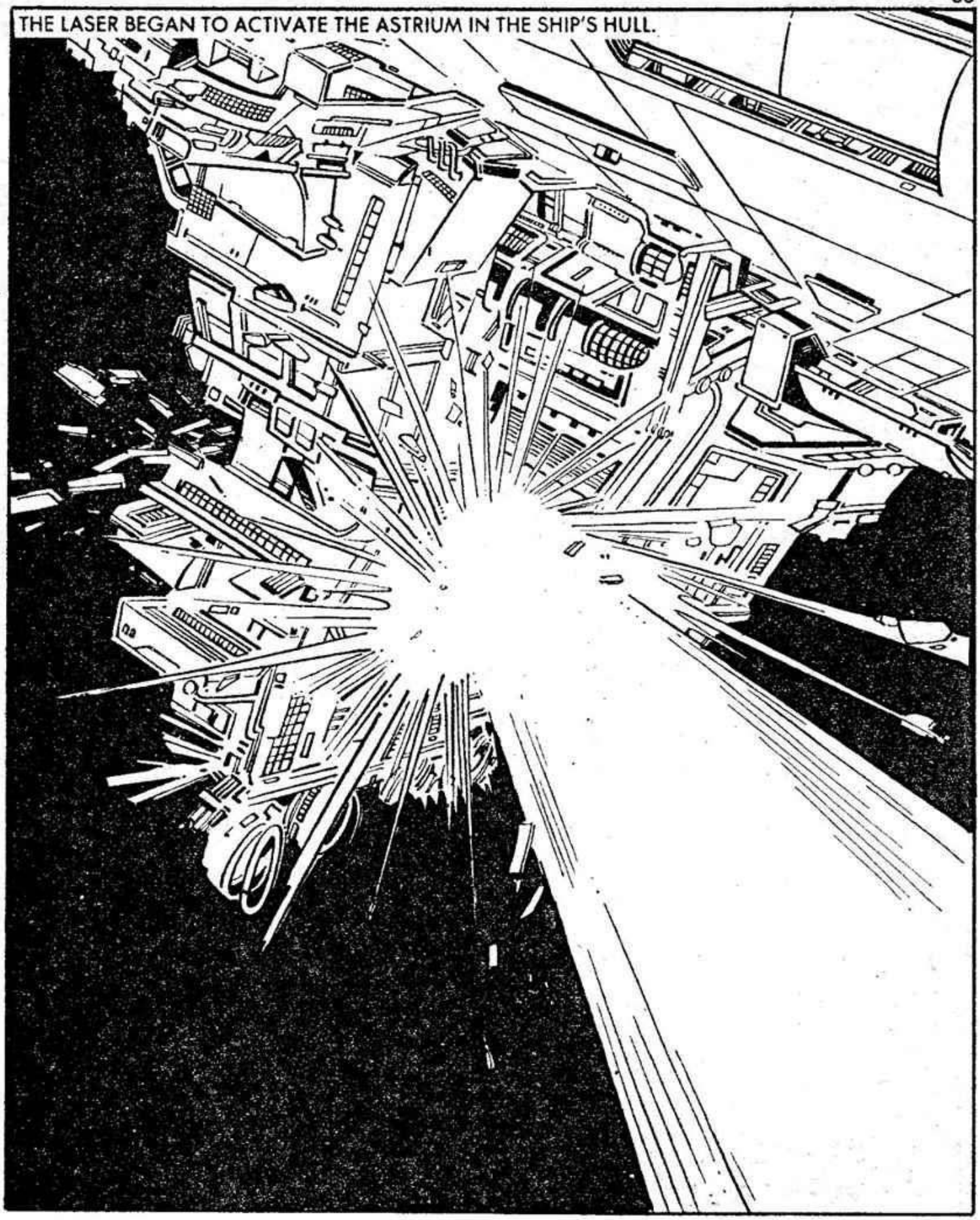
WELL, HERE GOES! CONTACT THE HIT SQUAD UP THERE.
4


THE HIT SQUAD'S JOB WAS TO LURE THE TROOPSHIP LOWER —

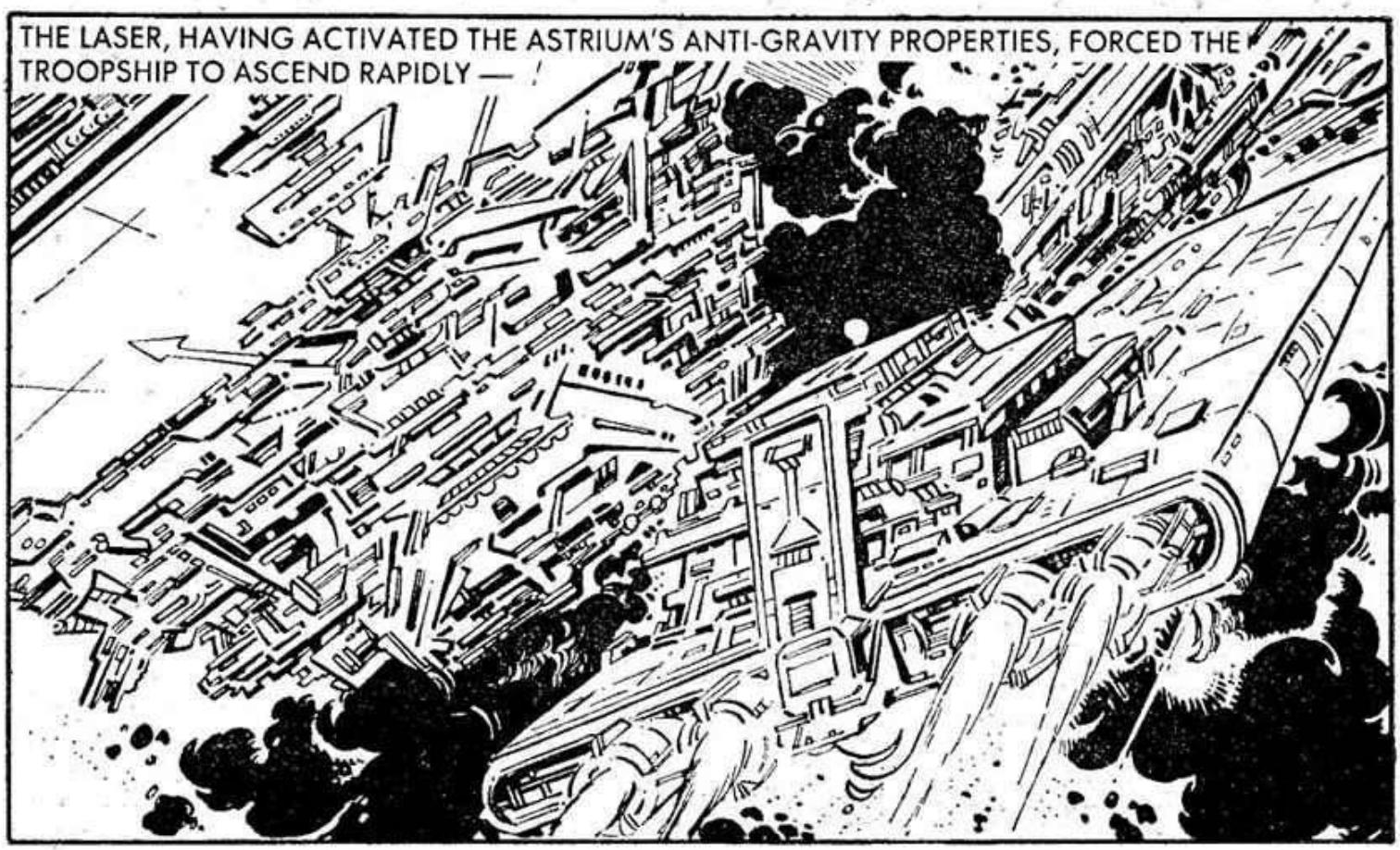
LET'S HOPE WE ANNOY THEM ENOUGH TO ATTACK US.

DESTROY THEM FOR THEIR IMPUDENCE.


THEY'VE DONE IT! SHE'S PASSING RIGHT OVER US.
AS THE SHADOW OF THE TROOPSHIP FELL ACROSS THE BUNKER, THE SPACERS TRIGGERED THE GREAT LASER.


THE LASER BEGAN TO ACTIVATE THE ASTRIUM IN THE SHIP'S HULL.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?
I DON'T KNOW! WE'RE OUT OF CONTROL!


THE LASER, HAVING ACTIVATED THE ASTRIUM'S ANTI-GRAVITY PROPERTIES, FORCED THE TROOPSHIP TO ASCEND RAPIDLY — !

THE TYRAN AND SPACER FLEETS DISPERSED TO SAFETY, AS THE SERIAZ FLEET OUT OF CONTROL, COLLIDED AND EXPLODED.
WE BEAT THEM! BUT THEY TOOK THEIR TOLL OF THE CITIES, AND PEOPLE.
CITIES CAN BE REBUILT, PEOPLE CAN'T! WHY CAN'T RACES LIVE IN PEACE?

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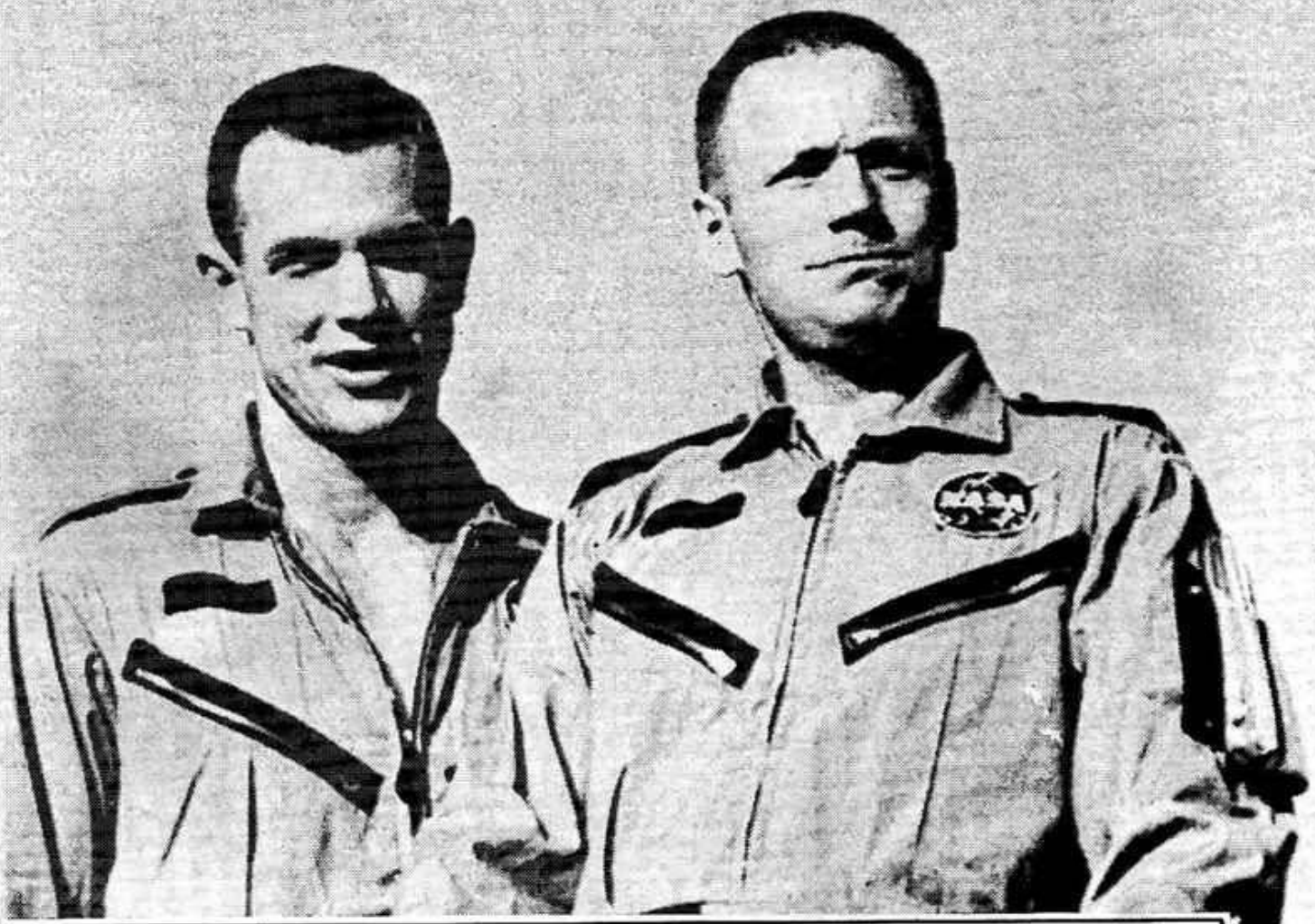
DON'T MISS

THIS MONTH'S OTHER ACTION-PACKED ADVENTURE

NOW ON SALE



The Gemini 8 crew, launched on March 16, 1966 on a mission of 10 hours 41 minutes 26 seconds, were Neil Alden Armstrong, 35, right, and Major David Randolph Scott, 34, U.S.A.F. Scott flew aboard Apollo 9 on March 3, 1969 for 10 days 1 hour 53 seconds. Armstrong was the first man to walk on the Moon during the Apollo 11 mission. This was launched on July 16th, 1969 and lasted 8 days 3 hours 18 minutes 35 seconds. Scott became the seventh man on the Moon during Apollo 15, launched on July 25th, 1971 for 12 days 7 hours 11 minutes 53 seconds. Armstrong and Scott left the programme to move into the world of big business.